

Human Development Magazine Spring 2014

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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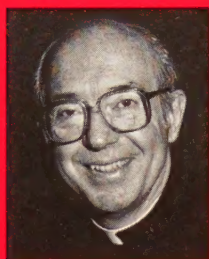
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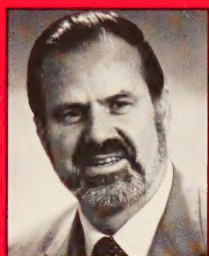
Jung's Impact on Spirituality



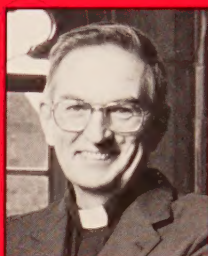
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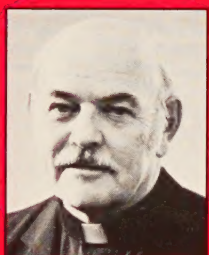
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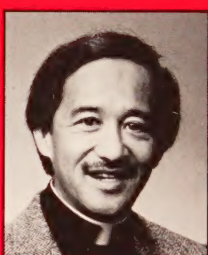
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EDITOR'S PAGE

LACKING CONTROL BUT AT PEACE

This year's Christmas season and the start of the new year seem different from those of the past. Perhaps this is largely due to intensified concern about the nation's economy, the rising unemployment rate, flaws in the health care system, urban deterioration, heightened racial tensions, and lack of leadership in solving these and dozens of other problems that are likely to afflict millions of people personally during the months and years just ahead.

In years past, when general optimism prevailed, Americans were looking forward to better jobs, higher pay, more fashionable places to live, better vacation trips—in short, a more affluent style of living. Vaguely, in the background, we could perceive the possibility that war with the Soviet Union, loss in economic competition with Asia, human devastation resulting from the AIDS epidemic, and ecological perils could deprive us of the sense of well-being to which we had grown accustomed and to which we presumptuously felt entitled. But we didn't need to alarm ourselves seriously about these threats that were beyond our personal control; we were able to focus our attention and conversations on things like cholesterol, calories, running shoes, salt substitutes, aerobics, health spas, and stress-reduction techniques. These self-centered preoccupations helped us maintain the illusion that we have control over our appearance, health, happiness, and longevity. Instead of talking at the dinner table about our vulnerability to the forces of nature, physical accidents, changes in the global economy, and shifts in the interna-

tional balance of power, we discussed our diets, exercise regimens, pets, cars, and stock-market holdings ad nauseam.

But now the winds of adversity are blowing close to home. People are beginning to be worried and fearful, angry toward those they blame for letting things get so bad, and increasingly aware of their own powerlessness to solve the nation's monumental problems. The 1992 presidential election will undoubtedly bring into the open—certainly with vehemence if not with violence—the resentment millions are feeling as their cherished lifestyle becomes gradually more austere and precarious.

At the present time, we all face a choice among three options. The first of these is to join the fearful and angry multitude holding others responsible for the impending loss of both our prosperity and our feelings of security. Resentment and unhappiness eventually accompany this stance. The second option is to ignore what is happening to the citizens of this country, narcissistically and obsessively focusing all of our attention on our own life issues such as appearance, possessions, nutrition, exercise, or weight reduction. The third is to learn the lesson of Christianity: Life is not given to us by God so that we will waste our days worrying about food and clothing and housing. Jesus reminded us, "You have a Father in heaven who knows that you need them all."

No matter how difficult the years ahead may prove to be, a trust in God's care for us will provide reassurance. The time may well come when we will have to rely heavily on others' willingness to share with us whatever they possess, and vice versa. That will be the real test of virtue. Will we manifest God's love by looking out for each other's well-being? Will we be able to let go of our 1980s obsession with material things and together learn to live in love and hope, aware of how vulnerable

we are and how much we need each other's support in order to survive the turbulence and threats the 1990s are ushering into our lives?

The scene at Bethlehem conveys a special message for us this year. God chose to be manifest in a setting totally lacking in affluence, where the necessities of life were supplied by Mary, Joseph, and shepherds who were guaranteed by angels that God would take care of them. All they needed to do was share with each other whatever they had to offer—nourishment, protection, companionship, and love. They knew all too well that they had no control over the political, economic, and international forces surrounding them. They had each other,

with the star proclaiming God's loving guidance overhead. That was enough for them. May we all face the uncertainties ahead of us with this picture of trust and tranquility etched deeply in our hearts. It is this peace and joy we editors of HUMAN DEVELOPMENT wish all of our readers on Christmas and on every day afterward.



James J. Gill, S.J., M.D.
Editor-in-Chief

Collaborative Efforts Benefit College Students

After five years of study, Harvard University researchers have concluded that the most effective strategy for an undergraduate student to pursue is to make alliances with fellow students, faculty members, and advisers, and not try to brave college competitively and alone. Richard J. Light, a professor in Harvard's Department of Education and director of the study, observes that "the thing for a student to avoid is signing up for all large classes, drifting in and out anonymously, sitting in the eighth row working quietly, and then going back to the library or a dorm room and applying the seat of the pants to the seat of the chair."

The study, published by Harvard in November, contains a variety of simple recommendations that are easy to adopt. Among them are the following:

- When students are unwilling or unable to organize into study groups that meet outside the classroom, professors ought to set up such groups and require that readings be completed before the groups meet.
- In courses with several writing assignments, professors should ask a few students each week to prepare their papers early so they can be photocopied and distributed for class discussion. Researchers found that this encourages students to work harder on their papers and enhances the quality of class discussions.

- Professors in science and mathematics should encourage cooperative learning and study groups rather than place too much importance on competitive grades, which drives interested non-majors from the field.

The Harvard report, described in the *New York Times* by journalist Anthony DePalma, is the second of two parts of an assessment of what constitutes effective teaching and learning at Harvard and, by extension, at all colleges and universities. The first part of the assessment, published in 1990, found that "students learned better and professors were more effective in courses where progress could be tracked through frequent tests, quizzes and one-minute exams at the end of a lesson." Some of the Harvard findings and recommendations have already been widely copied. The group study teams that are suggested in the second report are already common in law-school settings, but not in undergraduate courses, in the United States.

One student, Mrs. Kristina Putalik from Armonk, New York, stated that working with others in an academic study group afforded her "a deeper understanding of the issues, and a firmer grasp" of the topic. "I just find that I learn better from discussions and talking to other people about the same material," she said.

Jung's Impact on Christian Spirituality

William J. Sneek, S.J., Ph.D.

Understanding Carl Jung resembles learning to play the piano. Many of us as youngsters dutifully began piano lessons at the prodding of parents or teachers and were quickly rewarded when we would plunk out "Happy Birthday to You," "Mary Had a Little Lamb," or "Jingle Bells." Yet we soon learned that becoming a concert pianist, or even a somewhat proficient player, would take dedication, patience, energy, and commitment to practice. Most of us emerged from our music lessons far short of our (or our mentors') idealistic goals but with at least a basic appreciation for music, a taste for beauty in sound and in life.

Similarly, getting into the thought of psychiatrist Carl Jung has its immediate rewards in the form of insight, perspective, and hints about what we might do to grow in human and spiritual wholeness. A developing familiarity with Jung's complex thought, however, calls for concentration, persistence, and a degree of tolerance with his tendency to revise even the most basic definitions over the course of his writing. Many contemporary Christians emerge from their contact with Jung enriched but uncertain as to whether they want to attempt a deeper exploration of his ideas and of their own lives.

In this article I will give some impressions about the influence of Jung on contemporary Christian life. Then I will note a range of reactions to Jung, from holy horror to puzzled curiosity to grateful

discipleship. Finally, I will recommend an approach to assimilating what is most useful in Jung for pastoral practice and spiritual development.

INFLUENCE NOW WIDESPREAD

Future historians of culture are likely to dub the twentieth century the Freudian century. Freud published his *Interpretation of Dreams* in 1900, and through his invention of psychoanalysis and his extensive writings taught us to pay attention to our inner life, especially for clues about the unconscious, and to be skeptical if not suspicious of our motives because of the pervasive influence of sexuality and aggression. Freud had intended for his younger colleague Jung to carry the movement forward, but their intense friendship fell apart because of Jung's rejection of Freud's concept of pansexualism and because of Jung's fascination with the religious and spiritual dimensions of the psyche (aspects that Freud regarded as "illusion" and "occultism").

For Christians, perhaps the best-known single sentence from Jung's voluminous writings is the following from *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*: "Among all my patients in the second half of life—that is to say, over thirty-five—there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life."

Even the moderately educated have some inkling

Counselors employ their awareness of anima/animus dynamics to help resolve tensions in couples and families

of the usefulness of Jung's word-association test for discovering unknown depths of the psyche, and his terms *introvert* and *extrovert* have crept into popular culture. Jung's typology of personality describes most basically how people take in information through either sensing or intuiting, and how they come to conclusions through either thinking or feeling. This theory has been popularized through the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), an instrument widely used in business and the professions, and especially by clergy and religious over the past decade. Even the ordinary "Christian in the street" who has never heard of Jung but who listens to sermons or goes for counseling or spiritual direction will be exposed to thinking based on Jungian typological categories and to interpretations of human behavior, conflicts, and relationships based on the MBTI. Thus, Jung's personality theory is providing a theoretical framework for Christians' self-understanding and interaction at the conscious, behavioral level.

A proponent of depth psychology, Jung expressed even more interest in penetrating the mysteries of the unconscious through his own approach to dream analysis and through an interactive method of dealing with intrapsychic forces. In this technique, which he named active imagination, one deliberately invites contact with the unconscious through attempting to enter into conscious connection with psychological phenomena. One strives not to master the unconscious but to become its friend. The technique is called active because it involves more than mere talk with either oneself or one's counselor. One takes paintbrush in hand, or chisel, or at least pen. One engages the unconscious in dialogue by outwardly expressing the free-flow-

ing content of one's imagination in a focused meditation. In the name of the technique, imagination does not imply the possession of great creative gifts but rather permission for the unconscious to express itself spontaneously.

Active imagination is not restricted to Jungian analysts, however. It has been used by Ira Progoff and his followers in their Intensive Journal Workshops. Christians of various backgrounds and levels of sophistication are taking up the practice of recording their night dreams and daydreams in journals. Even if they do not know of the active imagination technique, and whether or not they have been trained by Progoff, they are struggling to become acquainted with the contents of their unconscious and to redirect its energies toward their personal and interpersonal healing and wholeness.

APPLICATIONS OF THEORY

Episcopal priests Morton Kelsey and John Sanford have done much through their writings to translate the sometimes abstruse works of Jung for audiences wanting to integrate the traditions of psychology and of religion/spirituality. Kelsey and Sanford provide theory and practical guidance for dream interpretation and for coming to terms with one's "shadow" and with one's anima or animus. Shadow is Jung's name for the inferior part of the personality, the sum of all the psychic elements that, because of their incompatibility with chosen conscious attitudes, are denied expression in life and therefore coalesce into a relatively autonomous "splinter personality" with contrary tendencies in the unconscious. Anima and animus are personifications of the feminine nature of a man's unconscious and the masculine nature of a woman's unconscious, respectively. Christian marriage counselors employ their awareness of anima/animus dynamics to help resolve tensions in couples and families. Jung's notion of the shadow contains implications for explaining and easing societal misunderstandings and warfare. He explained the Nazi holocaust as partially the result of a massive projection of the German people's collective shadow upon the Jewish race. He suggested that wars and international hostilities could be lessened by reeling in the projections of one's shadow. Here there is evidence for the applicability of Jungian theory far beyond personal growth and family relations.

If Jung's proposals concerning the shadow have implications for world harmony, his fascination with archetypes has contributed toward one-world consciousness and mutual understanding, important bases for world peace and order. The notion of the archetype emerges from the observation that the myths, fairy tales, and religious symbols of world literature crop up everywhere, often without any known historical intercultural contact. We

encounter these same motifs in the fantasies, dreams, deliria, and delusions of living persons today. Hunger for the truth of mythology has extended far beyond Jungian circles, as attested to by the popularity of the work of the late Joseph Campbell, whose five-part Public Broadcasting Service interview with Bill Moyers, *The Power of Myth*, is now available on videotape.

This brief survey of the impact of Jung would be incomplete without mention of the contribution of Centerpoint, an organization in Nashua, New Hampshire, that distributes tapes and discussion guides for study groups and for those who desire to further their understanding of Jung and their own healing and spiritual growth.

REACTIONS TO JUNG

The theme of growth in planetary consciousness brings to mind the German philosopher Hegel, whose vision of the emergence of Absolute Spirit emphasized the eternal dialectic between thesis (an original state of things) and antithesis (an oppositional, clashing reality or force), and their synthesis in a new and deeper resolution.

The Christian community has not peacefully welcomed Jung and his teachings with unanimous approval. Those who embrace Jung's point of view have for the most part focused on his psychological contributions. Those eschewing his stance have disagreed not so much because of adherence to another psychological tradition (Freudian, behaviorist, humanistic, cognitive) but because of his attempts at religious and theological speculation. Though Jung was an original genius in his psychological investigations of human behavior and suffering, he did not allow his creativity to be silenced in the face of any religious orthodoxy or dogmatism. The son of a Reformed Protestant pastor, Jung grew up in a household suffused with religiosity. His biography, however, reveals him to be a man disappointed that his father would not listen to his own theological doubts lest his dangerous thinking cost him his livelihood. Consequently, Jung forged his own explanations of religious questions and rejected his father's religious tradition, just as he would later turn away from his surrogate father Freud and the latter's psychological establishment.

Even those sympathetic to Jung without Christianity find it difficult, for example, to agree to Jung's replacing the Trinity with a quaternity whose membership includes, in addition to the Father, Son, and Spirit, either the feminine principle in the form of the Virgin Mary or the principle of evil, Satan, or God's Shadow. Usually, orthodox Christian believers manage their hesitancy by picking and choosing what they like from among Jung's writings. Jung himself admitted that internal logical consistency was not a strength of his vast,

Jung did not allow his creativity to be silenced in the face of any religious orthodoxy or dogmatism

sprawling system of concepts and theoretical musings. His disciples or even the mildly curious can tug at the fabric of his doctrine without ripping it apart. Yet, not all Christians have such an ecumenical reaction to Jung; it is time to acknowledge some of the objections of the horrified and the angry. Restricting ourselves to Roman Catholic responses, we might cite three articles.

In the *Dawson Newsletter* (Summer 1987), a publication of the Wanderer Forum Foundation, Joseph Koterski, S.J., wrote a scathing critique of Jungian thought, entitled "C. G. Jung and the Temptations to Rationalism." In it he opines that "Jung's apparent sympathy for religion is an insidious trap for the unwary, and is probably worse for Christianity than Freud's open hostility." Furthermore, he worries that "for Christians simply to bless the principles of Jung by a benign interpretation, kindly overlooking discordant remarks in the source-thinker, is to embrace great perils, including the reduction of God to the stirrings of the unconscious and the mistake of treating certain movements of our spirit as if they came from God when they might have had other sources."

Because Jung always referred to the "idea of God" rather than simply to God, Koterski and other critics blame him for explaining the evolution of the idea of God as a result of the evolution of the human psyche. Such criticism seems to overlook Jung's frequent statement that he was grounding his observations in data on his patients and thus wanted to avoid making any absolute metaphysical or theological pronouncements. Describing Jung's spirit as "blasphemous and promethean," Koterski notes the absence in Jung of any affirmation of divine transcendence or the unique-

ness of Christ's incarnation. Like many therapists and counselors, Jung noted that man makes God in his own image and likeness. Koterski sees this as a reversal of Christian anthropology, with its tenets of divine creation, fall, and redemption by the sacrifice of Christ. He faults Jung's striving for individuation, which includes the recognition and acceptance of one's shadow, as a secular replacement for salvation. Ultimately, Koterski's problem with Jung stems from his reading of an implicit rationalist and gnostic metaphysics underlying Jung's work, an outlook that conforms reality to the categories of the mind as opposed to his own "realist" outlook, which finds truth in the conformity of the mind to reality. Since Jung's anthropology seems to turn Christian anthropology upside down, and because Christian anthropology expresses reality, Koterski and others like him counsel Christians to distance themselves from Jung.

Leanne Payne and Kevin Perrotta coauthored "The Unconscious Confusions of Christian Jungianism" in *Pastoral Renewal* (April and May 1988), a journal for Christian charismatics. Whereas Koterski's line of attack centers on Jung's philosophical presuppositions, Payne and Perrotta focus on three dangerous tendencies they find in Christian Jungians: a tendency toward self-absorption, the implicit identification of God with natural dynamics within the self, and the confusion of Jung's goal of personal completeness with the Christian goal of holiness. They question whether Christian Jungianism offers an authentic enrichment of Christians' understanding of human psychology and spiritual life. Though they lament the contemporary church's "loss of understanding of the heart's capacity to symbolize and the head's capacity to be informed by what is in the heart," they detect in Jungians an investment of enormous energy in a seemingly endless exploration of inner reality, an unhealthy fascination with the unconscious, and an inordinate attention to the self.

Payne and Perrotta trace the cause of such disorder to Jungians' confusion of the self with God. Jung claimed that among the mind's archetypal images was an image of wholeness, which he called the "God archetype"—the mind's picture of God. What Christians would ordinarily attribute to God and his grace, Jung attributed to the unconscious, often in religious language. Because Christian Jungians tend to think that a person's urge to self-realization and one's harmonizing personal center contain and express God's purpose, their view entails a belief that the core of the human personality has somehow escaped the fall. Payne and Perrotta foresee a crisis of loyalties when the Jungian's duty to obey the self and its natural inclinations runs counter to the summons to take up the cross and follow Christ. Thus, they detect a subtle but radical difference in goals between Jungianism and Christianity. The Jungian goal is to bring the

potentialities of a person into consciousness and to integrate them; the Christian goal "necessitates the pruning of some natural potentials . . . [a] dying to self." They believe that "Christian Jungianism's process of self-completion, orchestrated by the self's harmonizing inner center, works against dying to self and living to God." Becoming more specific, they claim to "know of Christian leaders who have fallen into sexual immorality under the influence of Jungian ideas about the importance of expressing the erotic side of the personality." Their fundamental objection to the Jungian goal of self-completion through reconciliation of contraries derives from the idea that evil, rather than being rejected, must be integrated in the person.

They do grant Jung's thinking "some validity": "By calling for the reconciliation of good and evil Jung sometimes seemed to mean that by bringing what is evil to consciousness it can be confronted, freed of that which makes it evil, and integrated in the light. Denying, repressing, 'splitting off' the instinctual and symbolic aspects of the personality is, in Jung's view, exactly what makes them evil." Understandably, however, they hold back from Jung's call for the union of good and evil in a higher synthesis in God. Payne and Perrotta dispute Sanford's supposed ranking of consciousness and completeness over goodness. They interpret Sanford as deprecating morality for artificially restricting the person and encouraging Christians to adventure in evil and wrongdoing. Thus, Sanford and Jungians pose real pastoral problems "because they appear not mainly in scholarly books written for academic audiences but in popular-level books, conferences, and retreats." The concluding advice of Payne and Perrotta: "While these themes are not equally present in the works of all Christian Jungians, they are often serious enough to disqualify the works as guides to Christian living."

Writing in *New Covenant* (December 1988), Kevin Perrotta wonders about "Probing the Unconscious: Is the Journey Worth the Risks?" In that journal, which has a very large circulation among charismatics, he makes many of the same points he and Payne make in their earlier articles but also expresses concern that dream analysis, journal keeping, and other techniques to uncover the spiritual riches of the unconscious may take many Christians farther away from God: "For many the personal harm caused by these excursions into the unconscious may outweigh the potential benefits." Why? Because establishing a relationship with the self can become confused with establishing a relationship with God, and because Jungianism may help people become more conformed to secular culture and less conformed to God. Much of the current searching for God in the unconscious realm is shaped by non-Christian thought rather than by the teaching of scripture and the lived tradition of the church. Quoting Sirach 34:1-7, Perrotta holds

no hope that we may find within our unconscious a harmonizing center that can be our trustworthy guide to wholeness and with which we should cooperate.

ATTEMPT AT RESOLUTION

What reply can Christian Jungians offer to this assortment of serious charges clearly motivated by pastoral concern and love of truth? I shall summarize an unpublished essay by Jim Scully of the Benedictine Monastery in Pecos, New Mexico, and attempt my own synthesis.

Scully responds explicitly to the *Pastoral Renewal* articles. Rather than outright rejection, he suggests a process of discernment to determine where Jung was right and where he was wrong, and thus follows St. Paul's counsel to "test everything and hold on to what is good and shun every form of evil" (1 Thess. 5:21–22). An either/or attitude toward Jung in particular and psychology in general is causing much harm in the church. Scully finds the term "Christian Jungians" pejorative and prejudiced. Authors whose work Payne and Perrotta find unacceptable are Christians for whom Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior but who find some of Jung's thought useful for making the message of Jesus more relevant for persons of our day. That Payne and Perrotta do not discover much that is worthwhile in Jung cannot negate the fact that thousands of other sincere Christians have benefited from aspects of his thought.

Scully refutes each of the charges leveled by Payne and Perrotta. Since they do not define "unhealthy self-absorption" or give any scale of measurement to determine when interest in the unconscious becomes excessive, Scully concludes, their diagnosis of unhealthiness is purely subjective and based on their presuppositions. He notes that in quoting their sources Payne and Perrotta conveniently omit any passage in which the rejected writers urge cautions, advise rounding out inner work with activity in the outer world, or recommend consultation with a spiritual director or knowledgeable friend to help avoid too much involvement with the unconscious. Scully praises the efforts of Kelsey, Sanford, and others to help people come into dialogue with their unconscious as a counterbalance to the practice of religion as a purely external, social, or legalistic formality. Payne and Perrotta are in danger of abuse by neglect, since for them exploring dreams and moods is in itself excessive looking inward. Scully reminds his readers that the patriarch Joseph and the prophets Daniel and Ezekiel made good use of their dreams and visions. The blanket condemnation by Payne and Perrotta of attention to dreams goes contrary to scripture.

As for confusing the self with God, Scully faults Payne and Perrotta with black-and-white thinking.

Jung claimed that among the mind's archetypal images was the "God archetype"

True, Jung's writings over fifty years sometimes speak of the self as if it were God and at other times describe it as if it were a part of the human psyche. Yet Christian mystics of all ages testify that we are truly temples of the Holy Spirit and that in our souls' depths we can commune so deeply with God that we experience a union in which we seem to merge into oneness with God. Although Christian spiritual directors make a clear distinction between God and the human soul, Jung, a depth psychologist who abstracts from faith and comments only on reactions of the human psyche, sees the divine communications as emanating from the depths of the human. Though the spiritual director and the psychologist observe the same inner reality, one's perspective focuses on God's action while the other's observes only the movement of the human faculties that God has touched. Christians who find usefulness in Jung's insights can be trusted to know the difference between God and the self, even if Jung sometimes seems equivocal on the issue.

What about the accusation that Christian Jungians see evil in the ego but not in the self and thus imply that a part of the psyche has escaped from the infection of original sin? Kelsey clearly teaches that Satan and evil can influence both the conscious ego and the unconscious mind. Payne and Perrotta join the ranks of critics who forget that Jung speaks psychologically and who insist on interpreting him theologically. Furthermore, different denominations and even various schools within Catholicism offer differing versions of the nature of original sin and of what kinds of damage it does. Some hard-line Calvinist groups may describe human nature as totally corrupt, but for Catholics human nature is basically good, not evil

(though of course wounded by original sin). In quoting biblical texts about the evils of the human heart (which Payne and Perrotta too easily equate with Jung's "self"), they ignore other texts that show the human heart in a good light. Jung's concept of the self coincides with the ability of the human heart to be open to God's grace and revelation, to discern evil, and to know and do good.

Next Scully treats the objection that Jung confuses wholeness with holiness. For most people growth in holiness (union with God) parallels growth in wholeness (integration of all aspects of the personality). Christians will not attract converts by treating wholeness as heresy, by disparaging the realization of our full potential. We can and should pursue holiness and wholeness at the same time; they are closely interrelated and not as easily separated practically as they are theoretically. The pursuit of both involves courage and suffering, as Jungians advise ("taking up the cross," in Christian terminology).

Do Jungians advise stirring up eros? They might seem to, upon a reading of only the passages Payne and Perrotta cite without commentary on the delicacy and complexity of the Jungian approach to relationship counseling.

Can we integrate evil within the human personality? A sympathetic Christian might view Jung's unorthodox statements as a challenge to rethink the Christian position and to gain a deeper grasp of the many aspects of the mystery of evil. No Christian tries to integrate moral evil with virtue for the purpose of achieving a more balanced personality, nor does he or she see evil in God, as Jung seems to. Integrating the shadow, however, is an acceptable goal, since it is not entirely evil; it personifies all the inferior and rejected sides of the personality. Elements of the shadow that are morally evil cannot be integrated, but knowledge of their presence can further an understanding of one's temptations and weaknesses.

Do Jung and Jungians really advocate the rejection of moral standards, and adventuring in wrongdoing in the name of personal liberty and development? Again, the confusion of psychological and theological vocabularies lies behind this criticism. As a psychiatrist, Jung had to treat persons who had severely repressed even their healthy emotions and lawful desires in the name of an overly strict interpretation of Christian morality that had driven them into neurosis. For example, authoritarian notions of religious obedience have historically robbed people of their liberty of conscience. Doggedly striving to live in the joy of the Lord can induce denial of anger and depression. One does not have to be a Jungian to acknowledge that many Christians feel guilty for things they should not feel guilty about. Jung does not reject morality; he only rejects a one-sided, do-only-good approach that ignores our dark side.

Scully concludes his refutation of Payne and Perrotta on a positive note by seeing in Jung a corrective to an extroverted style of Christianity in that Jung offers a way for those who feel called to explore inner space. Jung can assist Christians who desire to renew their traditions of prayer, meditation, and contemplation. Rather than turn to Oriental religions and New Age practices, Christians can undertake an inner journey guided by one who speaks in a Western idiom with psychological sophistication.

Does such point-counterpoint argumentation convince those hostile to Jung? Impressed by Scully's reflections, I shared his article with a scholarly friend who had read Payne and Perrotta. My friend remained unconvinced, which set me pondering why he was unable to see any possibilities for dialogue with this admittedly controversial thinker. Deeper than any particular objection or its response lie two fundamentally different approaches within the Christian community to novel thought and movements. Call one the style of Anthony, the other that of Aquinas.

In the third century Anthony saw the world as completely covered with snares, dangers, and temptations. Withdrawing into the desert, he and his followers gave the church a witness of solitude, deep personal asceticism, and prayer. Anthony drew to himself many fellow hermits, as well as some who could not leave their families but who sought spiritual healing and guidance from him.

Contrast Anthony's style of withdrawal with the style of Aquinas, who in the thirteenth century accepted, assimilated, and Christianized the dangerous (at the time) thought of the pagan Aristotle. For a thousand years Plato's philosophy had been the church's preferred system of integrating Christian revelation with secular thought and culture. Aquinas systematically set about the challenging task of leavening Christian theology and practice with a new understanding of reality. It is difficult to believe that the books of Aquinas, now the church's official theologian, were listed in the Index of Forbidden Books for a century after his death.

Both stances—Anthony's of withdrawal and Aquinas's of assimilation—have had sainted proponents through the ages. Good Christians will always want either to hold back from the new or to embrace it. Neither style is orthodox, because psychological temperament rather than theological argumentation undergirds each. Certainly, the documents of Vatican II, especially the *Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, seem to lean toward discerned acceptance of novel cultural formulations and experiments rather than toward outright rejection. The desert and its attitudinal equivalent will always exercise a drawing power over some Christians, but if the post-Vatican II American church is to reach out in a welcoming gesture to the modern mentality, it

must learn to grow comfortable with Aquinas's style of inculturation rather than with Anthony's hesitations.

Let me conclude this apologia for Jung with some words from his *Psychology and Religion*: "I do not expect the believing Christian to pursue these thoughts of mine any further, for they will probably seem to him absurd. I am not, however, addressing myself to the happy possessors of faith, but to those many people for whom the light has gone out, the mystery faded, and God is dead. For most of them there is no going back, and one does not know either whether going back is always the better way. To gain understanding of religious matters, probably all that is left us today is the psychological approach. That is why I take these thought-forms that have become historically fixed, try to melt them down and pour them into the mould of immediate experience. It is certainly a difficult undertaking to discover connecting links between dogma and immediate experience of psychological archetypes, but a study of the natural symbols of the unconscious gives us the necessary raw material."

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The Route from HIV to AIDS

The worldwide attention given recently to professional basketball player Magic Johnson's public announcement that he is infected with the HIV (human immune deficiency) virus has raised in many minds a question about the length of time it takes for the infection to become the fatal disease AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). The progress of the disease is now reasonably well understood by medical researchers. At times the HIV infection advances to AIDS in a year or two, but the average time between infection and serious illness is ten years. Researchers expect some HIV-positive persons to go as long as fifteen or twenty years without getting sick. During the years prior to full-blown AIDS, many show no symptoms, although some briefly develop a disorder similar to mononucleosis, with fatigue, fever, swollen glands, and possibly a rash. These early symptoms generally disappear within a few weeks. Some patients have chronically swollen lymph nodes during the first five years after infection.

During the so-called middle stage, or second five-year period, many HIV-positive people have no symptoms, but the number of infection-fighting T cells drops to about half the normal level. Treatment with AZT, DDI, and other antiviral drugs is recommended. These

drugs are usually able to slow the progress of HIV if therapy starts early; other drugs are given to keep secondary infections at bay for a while.

In the late stage, or AIDS phase, the number of T cells (especially the T-4 "helper cells") is halved again, and the risk that bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites will take advantage of weakened immunity increases dramatically. Early in this stage some patients suffer weight loss, diarrhea, lethargy, and fevers. Infections of the skin, mouth, and tongue are common. To prevent one of the most common opportunistic infections, *Pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia, antibiotic treatment is initiated. As the collapse of the immune system continues, the brain may be attacked by a parasitic infection called toxoplasmosis, and the nervous system, liver, bones, and skin by the fungus cryptococcus. Cytomegalovirus superinfection can cause pneumonia, encephalitis, and blindness.

Researchers believe that as many as one million living Americans carry HIV and that 200,000 people have developed outright AIDS. More than 125,000 persons in this country have already died of the disease. Between 1,500 and 2,000 babies are born with the virus each year. Death often comes within two years of the onset of full-blown, or late-stage, AIDS.

Recovering from a Sex Addiction

An Anonymous Priest
and Eric Griffin-Shelley, Ph.D.

As part of his recovery from sex and love addiction, the anonymous author of this article prepared a presentation on shame. His message was a powerful one and, I thought, deserved a larger audience. His addiction involved compulsive masturbation and making obscene phone calls. He was found out and treated for this problem several years before we met. When we met four years ago, he had relapsed and was again undergoing residential treatment. Today he is doing well in his teaching ministry and is actively involved in a twelve-step program, the Augustine Fellowship of Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous (SLAA). He has co-founded three SLAA meetings and has functioned as an intergroup representative. The following are his thoughts on shame and guilt.

THE ADDICT'S PERSPECTIVE

We can begin to understand shame by appreciating some differences between shame and guilt. To begin with, shame is the more difficult feeling to experience and cope with. Addressing guilt (i.e., feelings about what we have done) can cause us pain, but not to the degree that addressing shame does. Shame (i.e., feelings about who we are) is more troublesome and more difficult to really feel. Shame stems from the person; it exists in us. If we get in touch with the shame, we touch more of who we are, and as a result we know more about

ourselves. Both guilt and shame bring us unpleasant feelings: in the case of guilt, we feel bad about our actions; in the case of shame, we feel bad about ourselves. Most high-school teachers have a small group of students who are regularly absent on test days. It probably seems safer to these students to skip school than to risk a personal failure on a test. The guilt of playing hooky is less painful to deal with than the possible shame of not measuring up or of failing the test.

We engender guilt when we transgress or violate some rule. On the other hand, we experience shame when we don't reach a goal. Shame points to some shortcoming, lack, or defect in our person. For example, if we steal or act out sexually, and if we perceive that action to be wrong, we feel guilt over this violation to others and/or to ourselves. Stealing or sexually acting out can also engender shame in us because we feel less than the persons we should be. So, shame and guilt are different, even though they can arise from the same situation. There is a difference between knowing that I have done wrong (guilt) and feeling that something is wrong with me (shame).

Shame and guilt can occur together in the same person. Because the phenomenon of shame can have corresponding feelings of guilt, the mingling of the two feelings increases the difficulty of coping with shame. If we think of something we have done that is wrong from a moral point of view, we

address the guilt when we make amends for the wrongdoing. But the restitution we make is not enough to touch and heal the shame we feel or to help us know and live with our real persons.

Guilt and shame are not identical but are often intertwined, especially since guilt hardly ever happens alone. Often, a violation of some rule involves falling short of your principles. When we lie, for instance, we not only do wrong; we also fall short of the value of integrity. When both guilt and shame arise, it is most important, in terms of fostering authentic, lasting sobriety from an addiction, to differentiate between the two and to first address our shame. Guilt feelings underscore the action ("Did I do *that*?" emphasizing the act performed). In contrast, shame highlights the person ("Did I do *that*?" emphasizing the actor). Shame always zeroes in on the person—on the agent rather than the action—and negates his or her worth.

Addressing and relieving guilt are necessary for addiction recovery. Hence, in the Augustine Fellowship of Sex and Love Addicts, step 8 (list those we have harmed and with whom we are ready to make amends) and step 9 (make direct amends with those people if possible, unless more harm would result) are necessary steps for the recovering addict. Addressing shame is crucial because shame, much more than guilt, is at the core of sexual addiction. Sexual addiction is tied more to a sense of personal shortcoming than to any kind of rule violation. Often we ignore or suppress our sexual addictions during much of our lives, not because addiction transgresses moral and social rules but because the admission of our addiction says that we are falling short of who we want to be. This feeling of missing the personal mark is expressed frequently at Fellowship meetings.

HUMAN LIMITATIONS ACKNOWLEDGED

A fundamental principal on which the Augustine Fellowship is centered is the reality of human limitation: we learn to admit our powerlessness over addiction and the loss of control in our lives (step 1). The Fellowship is concerned not with the action of the addict but with the addict himself or herself. The first step therefore stresses personal limits and teaches a necessary and saving message: that when we admit and accept what we fear in ourselves, we begin to discover the truth of who we are. Internalizing and recalling this truth allows us to continue toward recovery. Eventually, we come to an awareness that our radical limitation is not in our addiction but in our basic humanity. In other words, it is part of the human condition to have limitations. This is difficult to interiorize, even though we may find it easy to say. We expect ourselves and others to be more than human—to be perfect. We are impatient with ourselves and others when limitations are evident.

FEATURES OF SHAME

Many features of shame enable us to deal with its painfulness. The first is shame's relation to that which is not moral. Guilt comes from the transgression of some rule or commandment. Thus, guilt results from a willed moral violation and is often in proportion to the seriousness of the transgressing action. Even though shame can occur after a moral failure such as cheating, some of the perceived shortcomings for which one feels shame have nothing to do with one's moral system. Recovering addicts need to deal with two such shortcomings in particular: failure in love, and sickness.

FAILURE IN LOVE

The most common origin of shame that is not linked with morality is probably failure in love. This is true for all people, not just for addicts. For addicted people, this type of shame can be especially dangerous. How many of us, for instance, have ended up in our addictions because of feelings of not being loved or needed or accepted? Guilt over transgressions does not come into play in these cases. Through the addiction we try to fill the emptiness that comes from feeling unloved, unwanted, or unappreciated.

The shame that occurs after a disappointment in love can pervade an addict's life. Being rejected, not winning a sought-after pat on the back, can be a deeply wounding experience to the addict. Acting out only aggravates the feelings of shame. For the addict in recovery, strength can come from knowing that he or she is human and that the hurt is something positive in that it proves this. As an active addict, he or she may have tried to be super-human, perfect, without limitation.

SHAME RELATED TO SICKNESS

Another human failing that has nothing to do with morality and can be an occasion for shame is sickness. The shameful pain of illness can be worse than the shame of failure in love. To have a sickness is not to do anything wrong but to fall short of one's standard of health. It is normal to feel that we should maintain our health. When we become ill we sense that something is not right about us. Sickness implies personal failure. Both the notion of addiction as illness and the Augustine Fellowship's stress on the illness notion remove addiction from the moral realm, thus lessening personal guilt, yet squarely place the addict in the shameful place of being ill. The Fellowship understands addiction as a sickness rather than as a sin. It maintains a difference between the guilty feelings about an evil action and the shameful feelings of being without personal worth. The addict's experience tells him or her not so much that he or she

commits wicked deeds but that he or she feels worthless. The feeling of being without merit is more trying than guilt over committing bad deeds. Some people wonder whether viewing addiction as an illness gives the addicted person a greater sense of hopelessness. Is it not simply trading guilt for shame? This might seem to be, but the overwhelming experience of recovering addicts is that the illness conception is helpful in the recovery process.

Twelve-step recovery is successful because it is rooted in the reality of our human limitations. The Augustine Fellowship appreciates the deep danger to sobriety: the addict's tendency to expect all or nothing. Addicted people in recovery understand not only the reality of human limitations and the necessity of accepting them but also the health-giving effect of human limitation and its acceptance. That effect is that we appreciate our humanity and our gift of freedom. As humans, we are limited. As people in recovery, we accept the gift that true freedom is not having to act out.

ACTING OUT NOT WILLED

Let us consider shame's relation to the unwilled or the involuntary. Guilt suggests that there are choices. On the other hand, shame occurs over something involuntary—the inability to make a choice. For instance, when the addict asks, “Why do I act out? I don't want to, but I do,” we can look to the involuntariness of addiction behavior for the answer. The addict acts out because he or she is an addict. An addict is one who acts out in an addiction even though he or she doesn't want to. The answer lies not in the strength or weakness of the will but in the reality of being addicted.

That shame results from the unwilled can tell us something about the will and its limitations. The addict cannot will to never act out again—just as the hypertensive person cannot will away high blood pressure. In both cases, willing the problem to disappear is, in the final analysis, ineffective. I cannot simply will myself into sobriety. I can, however, choose not to act out today. I cannot effectively, over any length of time, merely will not to act out, but I can choose to be in therapy, to attend Fellowship meetings, and to do whatever else maintains my continuing recovery. It has to be an ongoing process. If I simply try to choose sobriety in the same way that I choose what shirt to wear, my sobriety will be short-lived, and acting out will not be far behind.

Shame often occurs when the will fails to effect what it cannot. To be aware of personal shame is to know that some features of life are simply not subject to one's will. Intangibles such as honesty, loyalty, and sobriety are not things and therefore can't be chosen. We can decide to be honest or sober, but any attempt to possess these attributes absolutely is illusional because of human limita-

tions. We can only move toward such intangibles; we cannot possess them absolutely.

SERENITY PRAYER HELPFUL

The attempt to deny the limitation of the will highlights the issues of control and dependence. The issue of control pervades the Augustine Fellowship. Often, for instance, this expression is heard: “You can do something but not everything.” The Fellowship warns us not to promise “never to act out again.” Instead, we learn not to take that first step toward acting out. We do this “one day at a time.” Addicts learn to reach out to others rather than to reach for their addictions. The encouragement “Keep coming back; it works!” is another constant refrain in SLAA meetings. These are the things we can do; we know we can't will the addiction away. In this area of personal control, the “serenity prayer” is most fitting: accepting things I cannot change, changing things I can, and knowing the difference. This prayer highlights the limitations on our own power to control.

Dependence is a related issue. To be human and limited is to be dependent. The addict's choice—the human choice—is not between dependence and independence but between dependence on that which is acceptable and dependence on that which is unacceptable.

SHAMEFUL FEELINGS DISPROPORTIONATE

One characteristic of shame is the frequent triviality of its sources. That is, the overwhelming shameful experience is often not in proportion to what has happened. Guilt feelings tend to be more proportional to the gravity of the offense. Shame, on the other hand, is likely to be set off by some minor failing, some small detail that highlights one's failure as a person rather than one's role as the transgressor of some law. For instance, a person who steals a thousand dollars from a corporation feels mostly guilt, whereas someone who does not chip in to the coffee pool feels more shame than guilt. If we can tap that shame and touch that triviality, we can make progress toward knowing ourselves. When we attend to the trivial, we can better examine the question, What type of person am I to have done that?

Shame can be addictive. The disproportion of the shame reaction tends to exaggerate our shame, and then we become ashamed of that inappropriate reaction. In other words, we are ashamed of being ashamed. In the fifth step of the Augustine Fellowship, we admit to God, ourselves, and another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. Such admissions have been a longstanding religious practice, as well as a modern technique of therapy. At Fellowship meetings the public confession of faults (sharing, as it is called) ministers to the

The Addict's Range of Options

*Will myself
into sobriety?
Impossible*

*Choose not to
act out today?
Possible*

*Choose to be
in therapy?
Possible*

*Choose not to
act out
permanently?
Impossible*

*Choose to
attend meetings?
Possible*

shame of the participants rather than to their guilt. This sharing helps us realize that our behavior is typical among sex and love addicts. When one hears the stories of others, one's own story no longer seems so monumental.

Because the stimulus of shame is often so minor, shame frequently catches us off guard. Shameful experiences reveal so clearly what and who we are; they let us see unknown features of our personality. Knowing oneself is at the center of shameful feelings. In the experience of shame we come to know the most interior, vulnerable parts of ourselves. This can be painful. A major part of addictive behavior is the attempt to flee from pain. The recovering addict knows this, but the active addict denies it. The pain of shame is the radical pain that we basically try to avoid—that gnawing hollowness, that fearful feeling that in some necessary way we fall short. When we realize that shame is at the root of our addiction, we appreciate the importance of touching the sore nerve of shame that we so long have denied.

ROLE OF DENIAL

Denial is a typical defense used to avoid the pain of shame. Countering denial with shared honesty and openly acknowledged mutual vulnerability is most effective. When we deny, we hide our feelings of inadequacy. Shame is related closely to denial because shame arises from a sense of failure as a person. Denial can continue even after we acknowledge our guilt and try to make amends for it. In some cases guilt can even be a defense against confronting and accepting what is denied. For instance, if an addict accepts the responsibility for his or her inappropriate acting out but doesn't admit that this behavior is out of control, then the admission of guilt becomes a form of denial.

Authentic guilt tries to avoid punishment. But the person whose deeper problem is shame tends to seek punishment almost as a cover-up. This person readily admits guilt or makes amends for his or her wrongdoings, and thereby tries to cover over the

True sobriety both acknowledges dependence as part of the human condition and exercises responsible independence

more deeply felt shame of sensing that he or she has fallen short as a human being. The recovering addict learns to look to the minor instances that trigger our shame. This type of attentiveness permits us to grow beyond our addictive denials and hidings.

THE HEALING PROCESS

Sobriety is a continuing process in which we get beyond our hiding, denial, and shame. The Augustine Fellowship provides a model by helping us to face our reality and suggests a method of reaching for continued growth. In the Fellowship we are accepted as limited human beings who need other people. The problem with shame is not other people; they are the solution. Denial and shame relate to our limitations. We deny our need for the addiction and for other people because admission of these needs requires the admission of our limitations. We mask our limitations because we are ashamed of them. We want to be left alone, thinking we can lick the addiction by ourselves. We tend to think grandiosely, as though we are omnipotent.

The Augustine Fellowship works for addicts because the program (if used properly) cuts through the twofold denial of the need for the addiction and the need for other people. The Fellowship builds an awareness and acceptance of ourselves as addicts and an ever-increasing realization that we need others. Without others, we would never have admitted to our addiction. The use of the plural pronoun we in the twelve steps is symbolic of this essential need.

Other people are the solution for shame, but not if we perceive them as distant or only as objects. Our relationships with others cannot be too stand-

offish. We need relationships with subjective, non-judgmental persons to help us deal with our shame.

Accepting people as people, not as mere objects, is essential to the model of caring for others rather than curing them. This model understands that interpersonal relationships are built upon certain mutualities. In general, mutuality in a relationship highlights the give-and-take between the people. In truly mutual relationships a certain reciprocity is evident. This is crucial to sobriety, and sobriety dissolves shame. To discover and live out mutuality helps us to go beyond the self-centeredness that lies at the core of our difficulties.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

One of the first mutualities that we discover and begin to practice involves the notion of making a difference. The ability to make a difference is a deep-seated human need. Consider the addict who tells his or her story to a Fellowship group. Traditionally, the members of the group thank this person after he or she is finished. The "thank you" speaks to whatever feelings motivated the speaker and counters the sense of being "no good" that gnaws at the speaker's self-image. Whatever else happens, the speaker senses that something has changed, something is different. At this meeting, the addict has something of value—a story, a struggle—to share. He or she makes a difference.

To be human is to need a place in another's world—to have significance. Mutuality implies making this difference by both giving and getting. When we say at a Fellowship meeting that we are addicts, we state not only that we need to achieve sobriety but also that we can contribute toward the sobriety of others by sharing of ourselves.

As addicts in recovery, we appreciate that we need others. By claiming that need, we address our shame. One of our deepest needs is the key to shame's solution: the need to discover that there are others like us, that we are not alone. The resolution for our shame lies in the need to be needed.

MUTUALITY OF HONESTY

A second mutuality that we learn to practice centers on honesty. There is a necessary connection between being honest with ourselves and being honest with others. When we lie to others about our addiction we are obliged to lie to ourselves. Likewise, when we lie to ourselves we must lie to others. A vicious cycle of dishonesty results. It is necessary to avoid self-deception if we are to be honest with others. At the same time we must be honest with others if we are to avoid self-deception. The beginning of breaking the cycle of addictive dishonesty is making the honest admission, "I am a sex and love addict." Our truthfulness in sobriety

sex and love addict.” Our truthfulness in sobriety must go far beyond that first admission. The Augustine Fellowship presents an ideal vehicle for restating, strengthening, and extending that basic honesty with self and others. The honesty of each person encourages the honesty of all. Finally, the mutuality of honesty is necessary to avoid the habit of dishonesty, which can become an addiction as strong as any sexual addiction. Honesty is therefore necessary for the sobriety of the speaker as well as for that of the listeners.

THE THIRD MUTUALITY

Both the first mutuality—that of making a difference—and the second mutuality—that of honesty with self and with others—lead into the third mutuality—that between personal dependence and personal independence. The latter derives from the reality that our limitations are essential to the human condition. Our human dependence and independence are essential to the human experience, and they are mutually related—not only between people but within each of us. Their mutuality implies that they enable and fulfill each other. In addition, each becomes fully humanizing only in association with the other. Let us consider the example (and the literal position) of being humbly on our knees. We are not standing, totally independent; nor are we flat on the ground, totally dependent. To be truly human is to be in the kneeling position, in between standing and being prostrate. In that middle position, we learn to combine, rather than to choose between, dependence and independence.

When we acted out in our addiction, we alternated between the claim of false self-sufficiency (“I can do it alone”) and the cry of hopelessness (“Please, do it for me”). The sober addict replaces these with the acceptance that he or she can do something and that he or she needs others in order to do it. True sobriety both acknowledges dependence as part of the human condition and exercises responsible independence. For example, when my addiction begins to click in, I contact my sponsor or someone else in my support system. In doing so, I

show responsible independence; at the same time, in reaching out to others for support, I acknowledge my dependence on others. Sober addicts gain the freedom to not act out only by acknowledging that the addiction is not *dependence* on the addiction but dependence on the *addiction*.

The model of mutuality and caring of the Augustine Fellowship works because it rescues addicts from the dire need and the doomed effort to deny all dependence. Because Fellowship members accept their essential limitations as humans, they come to appreciate that dependence demeans and dehumanizes only if that which is depended on is less than human. It appears to be part of human development that we become what we depend on. As addicted human beings, our choice lies not between dependence and independence but between being dependent on a negative, degrading experience such as sexually acting out or being dependent on a positive, ennobling reality such as our Higher Power. For the recovering addict, one of the best places to find experience and to connect with that Higher Power is in the presence of others, especially other recovering addicts.

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Developing a Relationship with God

Ignatian Exercises Aid Spiritual Growth

WILLIAM A. BARRY, S.J.

One way of describing the spiritual journey is to compare it with a developing relationship. I have come to believe that the dynamic of the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola is most profitably described in this light. By looking at the dynamic in terms of a developing relationship with the Triune God, we come to see how relevant and insightful Ignatian spirituality still is. I am convinced that the Spiritual Exercises remain a treasure for the people of God even though they were written over 450 years ago. In this article I will look at the transition points in the dynamic of the Exercises for the first and second weeks. I believe that reflection on these transition points can help us, both in our own spiritual lives and in our work with others.

THE PRINCIPLE AND FOUNDATION

The Spiritual Exercises begin with a statement, called the Principle and Foundation, that reads like an answer to the catechism question "Why did God make me?" Often enough the Principle and Foundation has been read and presented as a set of theological truths. What we may fail to recognize is that this set of truths is based not so much on deductions from theological premises as on reflections on lived experience in the light of theology. Ignatius, after much spiritual agony, came to experience God as the deepest desire of his heart; he

realized that he was created for God and that nothing else would satisfy him. Moreover, through his experiences at Manresa he came to have a felt knowledge of God's architectonic purpose for the creation of the universe. In the Principle and Foundation he tried to distill the fruit of those experiences in the light of his later theological studies.

In effect, Ignatius came to believe, through his own experience and through listening to the experience of others, that the perfect community, which is the Trinity, motivated purely by love, creates a universe in which persons made in the image of God are continually drawn by the cords of divine love into the community life of the Trinity. In the depths of our hearts we are being drawn by a desire for union with God and thus with all other persons. Ignatius came to believe that the Trinity wants each of us to live our lives in order to be part of the dream of God, the kingdom of heaven.

We human beings cannot, therefore, ultimately be happy and at peace in this life unless our lives are in tune with God's dream for the universe and for each of us. If we experience God as the Creator who loves us into existence for community with God, then we will have a positive spiritual identity; we will know that we are the beloved of God, the apple of God's eye. We can call this experience the affective Principle and Foundation needed to begin the spiritual journey of developing our relation with God or to make the Spiritual Exercises. With

this experience relatively firmly established in our hearts we will, at least inchoatively, realize that we should not let anything get in the way of attaining the end God has in mind for us. We will want to beg God to remove from us all inordinate attachments (which Gerald May, in *Addiction and Grace*, calls addictions); hence we will be ready to begin the journey toward the deepest desire of our hearts. For Ignatius we would be ready to begin the Spiritual Exercises.

I suspect that many of us know from our own and others' experience that it is often difficult to let this experience of God's creative love and dream for us take root in our hearts. A poor self-image can get in the way, as can an image of God as a snoop and a tyrant. Scrupulous people, for example, have the devil's own time coming to believe that God loves them "warts and all." Pierre Favre, one of Ignatius' first companions, testifies in his *Memorial* how plagued with scruples he was. It took four years of careful spiritual direction by Ignatius before Pierre was ready to make the Spiritual Exercises. Ignatius tells us that he himself was so plagued by scruples that he came close to suicide. Only after a long time of siege by such scruples did he come to the belief that God was not a tyrant. We will only ask God to purify us of our inordinate attachments and to reveal to us our sins and sinful tendencies when we believe in our bones that God is on our side, that God has our good at heart. If what I have just noted has any validity, then we need to be patient with ourselves and with those to whom we minister, willing to take the time and to use our ingenuity to help ourselves and others to have, and to have confidence in, such experiences of a loving, creative God who invites us into community with the Trinity. These experiences are the firm foundation upon which a developing relationship with God is built.

Before this foundation is firmly built, people live in an illusory world. They believe that God needs to be placated and yet is in a real sense implacable. They try, as Paul did, to fulfill the letter of every law in order to deserve, if not the love of God, at least God's grudging acceptance. The illusion comes down to the belief that "I am rotten to the core and unlovable." Many people live with this illusion. Those who minister in the church need to develop the spiritual techniques or pastoral practices that will help people to overcome this illusion and to come to a basic trust in God. Only with such a grasp of reality will they (and we) be able to ask God to reveal to them how they and our world have fallen short of God's dream for them and for the world.

THE FIRST WEEK

When people are becoming relatively firmly grounded in the experience of God as a loving Creator, as the Abba of Jesus, they often experience

a "honeymoon" period in prayer. They relish spending time relating to God; prayer seems easy and delightful. But the honeymoon period cannot last forever. We come to recognize that we have fallen short of the glory of God. We become aware of our resistances to further closeness to God. We want God to remove from us everything that hinders further closeness to God, but at the same time we are afraid of what such a removal will entail. We come to recognize that the world is not at all the garden of Eden that God intended. God has begun to reveal to us our own and our society's sins and sinful tendencies. We are entering the dynamic of the first week of the Spiritual Exercises, in which our desire is that God reveal to us our own and our world's sinfulness, forgive us, and enable us to live more and more in the freedom of the children of God.

The movements of the Spiritual Exercises and of the spiritual life in general are driven by desires implanted in us by God. Ignatius describes these desires in the second or third prelude before every meditation or contemplation in the Exercises. These desires cannot be forced; they must be authentic desires of our hearts. If we do not have the desire Ignatius expects to drive the dynamic of the first week, for example, the only thing we can do is to ask God to give us the desire. One of the key questions we can put to ourselves for our own prayer and to those we direct is, What do I really want right now from God or in my relationship with God? Honesty about our real desires is crucial for growth in our relationship with God and, indeed, in any relationship. In planning retreats for groups of people we need to keep in mind that the people in the group will vary widely in their desires. As we give "points" for prayer, it would be good to remind our listeners to move with their own authentic desires.

After the honeymoon period in my developing relationship with God, then, my desire becomes that God reveal how far I have fallen short of God's dream for me and how my inordinate attachments (addictions) keep me from living out God's dream. But I also want to know that God still loves me, with all my flaws and limitations; I want to know that I am a loved sinner. Only such knowledge will give me the grace and the impetus to try to overcome my sinful tendencies. Moreover, I want God to reveal to me how far my society, my culture, my church, my world have fallen short of God's dream without losing God's loving care.

A scene in Brian Moore's novel *Blackrobe* illustrates, for me, the desire of this stage of the spiritual journey and its fulfillment. The novel develops the clash of alien cultures as the French Jesuit missionaries try to evangelize the Hurons and the Iroquois. The hero, Père Laforgue, has struggled through this clash. He has come close to despair and to loss of faith. He has seen the Native Americans, the French colonizers, and the Jesuits at their

Shift in Retreatant's Longings

Week One Desire

To know in a heartfelt way that God is with me where I am (broken, sinful, and needy).

Week Two Desire

To be where Jesus is: to know him, his values, and his mission, and to be part of that mission.

best and at their worst. At the end of the novel he is baptizing Hurons, knowing that their baptism will be the death of their civilization. Moore writes, "And a prayer came to him, a true prayer at last. 'Spare them. Spare them, O Lord. Do you love us?' 'Yes.'" The novel ends with these words. That prayer, "Do you love us?"—said with the knowledge of our own deep sinfulness and our world's—expresses the desire of this period of the developing relationship with God.

The fact that we need reassurance about God's love of us sinners indicates that at this stage of our spiritual journey we also labor under an illusion. It is difficult for us to believe, in our bones, that God loves sinners. Yet Jesus died for us sinners. This illusion, like "I am rotten to the core and totally unlovable," dies hard. Yet only with its death and burial can we be free. While we live with this illusion, we continually try to prove that we are lovable; we continually try to save ourselves. Only when we can let Jesus wash our feet when he and we know our sinfulness, only when we can look into the eyes of Jesus dying on the cross for our sins and there see love, are we living in the real world which is still, in spite of all its crookedness, a world where God continues to draw us into community with the Trinity, where Jesus gave up his life precisely for us sinners.

When we are freed from this illusion, then we know in the depths of our hearts that "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that

whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him" (John 3:16–17). With this deep, heartfelt knowledge we can speak to Jesus on the cross as a friend speaks to a friend. Then we will be able to ask ourselves, driven not by unhealthy guilt feelings but by genuine love and shame, What have I done for Christ? What am I doing for Christ? What will I do for Christ? Now, perhaps, we are ready to allow the desire to know, love, and follow Christ to rise in our hearts.

THE SECOND WEEK

The desire of the second week of the Exercises is expressed in the third prelude Ignatius suggests for each contemplation: "Here it will be to ask for an intimate knowledge of Jesus in order that I may love him more and follow him more closely." A fundamental shift in orientation has occurred in those who now have this desire. Prior to this shift the focus was on ourselves and our needs. We have wanted to know in a heartfelt way that God is where we are—with us in our brokenness, our sinfulness, our desperate need. With this shift in desire we now want to be where Jesus is; we want to know him and his values and his mission, and we want to be part of that mission. The difference might be illustrated by two different images of ourselves in relation to Jesus. In the first week we

are like the blind man Bartimaeus, who wants Jesus to give him succor, to heal his blindness. In the second week we are again like Bartimaeus, who, now seeing, follows "Jesus on the road" (Mark 10:49–52).

Ignatius did not believe that many people were ready for this kind of shift of perspective. Hence he was slow, it seems, to give the full Exercises. There are many who, because of physical or psychological traumas suffered in childhood, find it almost impossible to focus for long on anything but their own need for healing. I realize that I am reading into the text, but I want to use as an example the man from whom the legion of demons was driven out. Afterwards, "the man who was demon-possessed begged to go with [Jesus]. Jesus did not let him, but said, 'Go home to your own family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you'" (Mark 5:18–19). Perhaps the man was too scarred by what he has suffered to be able to make the radical shift that discipleship with Jesus entails. At any rate, we might keep in mind the possibility that we ourselves or those to whom we minister can only be hurt by being pushed into a desire to follow Jesus when such a desire is beyond our capacities.

Those who desire to know Jesus in order to love him more and to follow him more closely will also encounter resistances to the call of Jesus. We will be as blind as the disciples who, after each of the three predictions of the passion, show how completely they have missed the reality of the call. After all, those who follow Jesus too closely may—indeed, will—suffer the same fate he suffered, or at least something similar. Here the source of the resistance is much more realistic. The disciples, when they finally became like Christ, did suffer persecution and martyrdom. Throughout the ages those who have become like Christ through close personal relationship have suffered the same. Yet even here an illusion lies behind the resistance. The illusion is that we can control our lives and our fate. If we surrender ourselves to the following of Christ, we fear that we will lose control of our lives and our fate. Yet this fear keeps us from what we most desire at this stage of the spiritual journey—namely, closeness to Jesus. Throughout the gospels Jesus contrasts faith and fear and continually points out how useless fear is. In the final analysis Jesus' call to discipleship faces anyone who hears the call with these words of Jesus: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for gospel will save it. What good is it

for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark 8:34–37).

Ignatius, of course, was astute enough a spiritual guide to know that we cannot follow Jesus in this way without the grace of God. In the meditation on the Two Standards he indicates quite clearly that both standards, or value systems (that of Satan and that of Christ), run through each human heart. Hence, he proposes the triple colloquy in which we ask Mary, then Jesus, then the Father to make our hearts more like the heart of Christ. We are addicted to possessions, to our reputations, to our honor, and so we cannot by ourselves embrace the values of Christ. Yet these values are the real values that bring true happiness and peace in this life and in the next. In this sense Christianity is what John Macmurray, in *Persons in Relation*, calls "real religion" in a remarkable statement: "The maxim of illusory religion runs: 'Fear not; trust in God and he will see that none of the things you fear will happen to you'; that of real religion, on the contrary, is 'Fear not; the things that you are afraid of are quite likely to happen to you, but they are nothing to be afraid of.'" Ignatius suggests that those of us who want to be intimate followers of Jesus must beg over and over again to be freed from our fears and illusory values in order to embrace the values of Jesus.

UNDERSTANDING HELPS RELATIONSHIP

I have tried to describe the transition points at the beginning of the spiritual journey toward a more intimate relationship with the Triune God. My hope has been to stimulate reflection on the stages of our own spiritual journeys and to help us to understand better the dynamic Ignatius discovered in his own and in others' experience. The more we understand the dynamic, I believe, the better we will be able to help ourselves and our neighbors to develop our own personal relationship with the Triune God, who calls each of us into the interpersonal life of the Trinity.

RECOMMENDED READING

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The Woman Clothed in the Sun

James Torrens, S.J.

Heads itch for a crown,
they sprout horns to gore.
A beast will ravage,
many stars will fall.
Just watch the news.

Sunbright, a woman labors,
her child's in peril.
Heaven enfolds him,
the wilderness hides her.
And that's the newest.

At a time of "the distress of nations" (Luke 21:25)—what Thomas Hardy, quoting Jeremiah (51:20), called "the breaking of nations"—Christian readers turn instinctively to that vivid text at the end of their scripture, the book of Revelation. Reading it for a historical key—a prophecy exact as to antagonist, date, and outcome—cannot but confuse and disappoint. A more patient quest for understanding, on the other hand, is intended to prove fruitful.

Consider then, at the end of this convulsive year,

in the Nativity season, these words at the heart of Revelation, which the church appropriates for feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary, such as the Assumption and Our Lady of Guadalupe:

A great sign appeared in the sky—a woman clothed with the sun, and with the moon beneath her feet, and with a crown of twelve stars on her head; and she was with child, and she cried aloud in her labor and in her agony to bear the child.

And another sign appeared in heaven—lo! a great flame-coloured dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and with seven royal diadems upon its heads. Its tail swept a third part of the stars from the sky and cast them on to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to bear the child so that it might devour the child as soon as she bore him.

She bore a man child who is destined to rule the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was snatched away to God, even to the throne.

The woman fled to the desert where she had a place prepared for her by God, that they might care for her there for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

(Rev. 12:1–6; William Barclay, trans.)

To speak first about Our Lady of Guadalupe: How strange and wonderful that the picture imprinted on the cloak of Juan Diego, an Indian peasant, was steeped in details traceable to this very text. The divine glory surrounds *la Virgen*; she is almost within its womb. And the crescent moon, that ancient symbol of fertility and bodily change,

is under her feet. The stars, however, do not crown her; rather, they stud her cloak. Mary has her hands folded in prayer and her eyes cast down, as one of the faithful. Her demeanor is very much of the earth—of the Mexican earth, in fact. She is not so much the Queen of Heaven as the Virgin of the Annunciation, reverent and humbled by the news of her divine motherhood.

The passage of Revelation, to return to that, clearly alludes to the birth of the Messiah (although the Anchor Bible does not quite agree). Who but the Messiah, according to Psalm 2, is “to break [the rebellious nations] with a rod of iron”? The woman about to bear him, we are tempted to say, appears hardly human—more like the goddess depicted in the Near East, with the signs of the zodiac crowning her. The twelve stars of Christian imagery, however, recall the twelve tribes of the faithful and, above all, celebrate their designated founders, the apostles.

The woman bearing the Messiah literally has to be Mary—the Mary who, St. Luke tells us, fled with her child and husband into Egypt, that desert, when threatened by the rage of Herod. Nonetheless, says William Barclay in his *Commentary*, “she is so clearly a superhuman figure that she can hardly be identified with any human figure.” In symbolic terms, “the woman clothed with the sun” can only be the bride of Christ, the church, mother of the faithful. But an immense problem of interpretation arises for the modern reader. Doesn’t the flight of the church seem wrong? Are we to think, in the old defensive way, of the church fleeing the world—that same church whose mission the Second Vatican Council presents so positively in the decree *Lumen Gentium* (*The Light of Nations*)?

HISTORY RECORDS FLIGHTS

One avenue of response has to be the historical. We need not search too far for those recurrent moments, those eras even, of oppression, of persecution, in which the mere survival of the faith is quasi-miraculous. Russia is just emerging from one; Albania also. Shusaku Endo, among others, has chronicled the underground continuance of Christianity in Japan for over two hundred years. The book of Revelation was composed in the face of a harsh Roman crackdown in the early Christian

era. In the passage at hand the writer must be remembering the siege of Jerusalem, where the local church had literally to flee to the wilderness.

The beleaguered condition is thus familiar—even expected. Barclay, quoting H. B. Swete and remarking on the loneliness of the desert condition, comments, “For the early Christians life was lonely; they were isolated in a pagan world. There are times when Christian witness is bound to be a lonely thing—but even in her loneliness there is divine companionship.”

Over and beyond the epochs of crisis, a deeplying conflict of values will always threaten the life of Christ within the faithful. In our own time, an era of attention to rights, some of the supposed rights—the right to end one’s misery, “the woman’s right to privacy,” the untrammelled rights of property, the right to say and publish anything, the right to have heavy arms—seem to fly in the face of the gospel. The world as such, and its Prince, will always be hostile to justice and equality, self-sacrifice and chastity, honesty and generosity. Even while struggling with it and against it, one will feel absorbed, isolated, silenced.

Perhaps this is what St. Paul meant in saying, “You have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3). A necessarily hidden life in the midst of a very public life is what St. Paul seems to be pointing to—interiority of attention, peacefulness amid upheaval, a desert experience on city streets.

The Nativity we celebrate at the end of the year is not principally Our Lord’s first coming and certainly not yet his second. It is the in-between coming, in which we ourselves are located, in the busyness of city life and the wilderness of the world. He is not visibly present. But all the signs, the sacraments, the words, convey Him. We are mothered by them.



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Choosing Names for God

Suzanne Zuercher, O.S.B.

How do people talk to God? What do people call God? What names fit God and those who address God? Saints, and probably other less obviously holy people, have always had pet names for God, but most of us have used the names for God given in scripture and liturgy. We haven't thought much about all this until recent years. In fact, we even assumed at times that our names for God were adequate descriptions of the Divinity. At least we are more reflective about this issue than we once were. Now we face some problems our reflection has raised.

Many of our names for the Divinity were masculine ones, either because they came from a patriarchal society or because the limitations of the English language forced gender on words. Now what do we do as we grow more sensitive to the effect of excessively male and male-role-oriented references attributed to the Divine?

It seems one thing to broaden our references to human beings and quite another to follow the same approach when naming God. Humans are both male and female. When we mean to speak about both men and women, we need to use words that reflect that. Granted, the English language intended the male nouns and pronouns to apply to both sexes—but the time has clearly come to extend both our word choice and our concepts. Contemporary people are sensitive to this issue; changes are coming. We see them in the books we

read and hear them in the liturgies we attend. Addressing the Divine is becoming another issue in the effort to move from a patriarchal to an inclusive attitude.

NO TITLE ADEQUATE

While we refer to God as male either in a fatherly or authoritarian role, Divinity is not limited by sex. The exception, of course, is Jesus, who is addressed in masculine terms and who instructed us to address the Divine as Father. Given the reality of Jesus, who is human and therefore sexual, how do we speak to the Divine as other than male?

St. Augustine tells us something important: "If you have understood, then what you have understood is not God." He reminds us of that apophatic approach to the Divinity which says that anything we predicate of God is, by reason of our doing so, not true. To carry this further to the issue of naming God, any title we give the Divine cannot be God's name. One cannot capture the Divine in any title—except, perhaps, one stating that God is beyond human comprehension and expression. God can be contained neither by our minds nor by our words.

This said, we can acknowledge our need to speak to God because relationship with the Divine is of our essence. There is no one more vital for human beings, as people of faith, to speak to and about. We

communicate with God individually in personal prayer, together in communal worship, and also through conversation with one another and the reading of God's story in scripture.

Everything we say about God, flowing from the titles we have for the Divine, is metaphorical. The limitations of our minds force us to use analogies to hold on to aspects of this unutterable Divinity. All analogies limp, the saying goes. All of them capture something of who God is; none hold it all. God is our Father and our Mother, too—and God is neither. God is a Rock and not a rock. God is the Ruler of the earth, but not in the way we know rulers to be. We must talk about God, but in the very speaking we are faced with the inadequacies of words and concepts.

We are also faced with our histories as individuals and cultures and the connotations that flow from them. What we say about God touches on our particular and concrete experience with those very metaphors. For some, calling God a Father brings back wonderful memories of joy and security and self-acceptance; for others it means rejection, sadness, and violence. For some, God as Mother is a threatening thought, amounting to a feeling of physical suffocation and an instinct to push away in order to survive; for others it represents peace and protection and care. Most of us have mixed reactions. Images are like that. They take shape out of our experience and color our responses.

AVOID NEGATIVE CONNOTATIONS

One solution to naming God that has been proposed and even implemented to some degree is choosing metaphors less likely to carry negative connotations. In psalm translations, for instance, the Divine is referred to as being Life and Energy and as playing the roles of Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. God is addressed as the Source of all good, the God of mercy and forgiveness, and many similar titles. Finding such ways of addressing God is helpful and needs to be encouraged. In fact, given the variety of human experience, I suggest that this may be the best solution. Among various and even opposite names for God will certainly be some that touch our hearts and draw us deeper into relationship, which is after all why we name God at all. We are reaching out to the Divine because it is fitting, right, and appropriate for us as human beings to do so, and because it is our need.

If we make our goal the use of names for God that have less personal energy—be that energy positive or negative—we risk bypassing some important issues. A generic God may be less likely to offend, but that God is not one who confronts us either. If we name God in ways that fail to reflect our life issues, we avoid a God with whom we must interact. Granted, how we feel about ourselves when we relate to God the Father or Mother or

Addressing the Divine is becoming another issue in the effort to move from a patriarchal to an inclusive attitude

King or Lord or Ruler may not strengthen our self-concept. It may, however, force us to look at our feelings of being a male or female child, a subject, a slave, a serf.

MATURITY REQUIRES CONTEMPLATION

Connotations abound for most of us in these relationship images because of our individual and cultural stories. We need to turn toward these real aspects of our experience. To bury or deny them rather than to lift them up and face them is to fail in that task of human life which we call contemplation. Living contemplatively is something we are called to do as human beings possessed of consciousness. As life continues, we are asked to look more and more straightforwardly at who we are and what our environment is. To do so is a sign of maturity and fullness as a human being and spiritual person.

Such humility, an honest admission of all that comes into our awareness, whether limitation or strength, is the cornerstone of spirituality. It involves gathering the buried strands of all our experiences, whether negative and dark or positive and bright, into the fabric of ourselves. It means attending to our feelings, knowing that what we are aware of today is dependent largely on what our past history has taught us about similar realities.

It is essential to our growth into whole persons that we remember ourselves, recall with feeling the stuff of our lives. That means especially the stuff we would rather not look at, what we have left out along the way; that is where the gaps in our fabric exist. It means acknowledging our sinfulness. St. Teresa of Avila has said that the sinner is one who

Our view of self is mirrored in our view of others, including that Other we call God

does not love self enough. If we are to become merciful and forgiving, we need to look straight at how we once abandoned ourselves, how we came to an attitude of hardheartedness toward who we are. We cannot continue to bypass our hearts of stone on our way to hearts of flesh. That is what we did in our early lives, spent remaking ourselves into people we thought we and others would tolerate. Mature spirituality necessitates our acceptance of ourselves as we are, of others as they are. We learn that our view of self is mirrored in our view of others, including that Other we call God. As we allow more and more of our reality into consciousness, we are reconciled more and more with other people and with the Divine.

MOTHER REPRESENTS GOD

One example of this dynamic might serve to clarify at this point. I choose this example because it is one we all know. It is what Carl Jung calls archetypal, universal, part of every human story. No one is free of some energy around the metaphor it suggests to us about our own lives and our life with God.

Mother—and therefore God—holds much ambivalence for each of us as we move from infancy to childhood. We all learn early in life that mother—and therefore God—is not all-accepting, all-allowing, all-embracing, all-supporting, all-providing, all-caring. The mother we thought was God has limitations. She does not know all things, nor does she have power over what we ask her to conquer for us. We lose faith in her support and in ourselves, whom we come to judge as we think she judges us: inadequate, worthless, and bad. And yet this moth-

er—and therefore God—holds power over us, can destroy us, can demand and even force us to do what she says, feel what she wants us to feel, think what she wants us to think.

We turn away from this mother, who represents our initial experience of the all-providing God, that God of the creation myth who lives in the Garden of Eden. We determine that this person, who is all we know of God, is not to be trusted. Why wouldn't we so decide, given our experience with the mother we identified with Divinity? We develop issues with this god-who-is-mother—issues regarding our rejection of ourselves, what St. Teresa says underlies our sinfulness. They shape our attitudes toward self and toward the Divine—attitudes that take a lifetime to reverse.

These attitudes gradually change as years pass, to the degree that we welcome back into consciousness what we had buried to gain acceptance from mother, from God. When we come to the home within at our center, that experience of our worth and our goodness, we find the true God there, true Life, true Mother, true Nurturer, the one who cares and supports and sustains our existence. We have wandered the earth as Adam and Eve did in the creation story and have learned we are not abandoned, though we have hidden from God. Life teaches us that God has remained at the center of our being, going with us every step of our way.

Karlfried von Durckheim calls this an experience of the immanent and transcendent God. It is this coming to ourselves, our interior word, that brings us an awareness of the truth of our life, which meets Life in fullness. This God is nearer to us than we are to ourselves, says St. Augustine. Julian of Norwich speaks of it a bit differently; she says that between the soul and God there is no between.

However we talk about this reality of Presence, it is the province of the mature person. It is the fruit of growth in relationship, both with the self and with the Divine. It includes the words we speak to God and the feelings with which our personal stories have laden those words, those titles, those names.

STEPS TOWARD WHOLENESS

By looking at God our Mother we look at ourselves and who we have shaped ourselves to be. We unearth the buried memories we could not allow ourselves to look at, memories of trust and distrust, joy and loneliness, peace and rage, value and worthlessness. Just facing the God who is Mother, we face our own journey and lead it a few more steps to completion, to wholeness, to conversion, to maturity.

We may not want as men or women to relate to a God we see as a devouring mother. We may not, especially as women, want to hold a masculine image of God, because of what our personal fathers or our patriarchal society has contributed to our

negative self-consciousness. We may not want, as people with a government structure founded on freedom, to invoke God by the title Ruler or King or Lord. Some of us may not want to speak to a God who is Fortress or Stronghold in battle.

In personal prayer the choice is our own; we can address the Divine in terms that fit for us, and we will do so differently at various moments in our lives. Each of us will come up against metaphors for God expressed in names that are acutely painful and angering and self-diminishing. We will do so in our own rhythm, the phases of which are awareness, discomfort and anguish, and, finally, resolution and embrace. These make up the phases of conversion and transformation.

The worshiping community gathers people at many different points along the way to conversion. Our openness to seeing life/Life and letting it shape and form us is the faith experience we bring to community celebration. We come as people engaged in contemplative growth—which is, we must remember, not some sleepy quiet but the peace that allows the honest acknowledgment of reality that the spiritual masters and mistresses have always called humility. The problem of how to address God is acutely felt when we join together in worship. Yet worship we must as human beings.

Were we to use only nonconflictual names for God (although how we would be able to find some is hard to imagine), would we not be refusing to allow the community to grapple with metaphors wholesome for it to consider? May not some issues particularly difficult for some of us be ones that others have set to rest, whose reconciliation they want to celebrate? May the very fact of our negative response to some names the community uses to address the Divinity be our call to ponder those titles within our hearts? May we merely be avoiding important steps in our personal journeys by insisting that community prayer be couched in words that are inoffensive? And who judges what is offensive and what is not?

St. Benedict, in his rule, called communal worship the Work of God. This means that praying in common takes not only physical effort but psychic and spiritual energy as well. Perhaps one aspect of that work is to be aware of what rubs us the wrong way, saddens and enrages us, forces us to grapple with who we see ourselves to be in relationship to Power greater than ourselves. Perhaps we are being

called to interact with our own history as well as with the Divinity in the names we call God, who like all else can be experienced only by engagement.

So what is the solution to naming God? It does not seem to be eliminating obviously problematic titles or finding ones with fewer connotations. One way to address the naming of God might be to look for ways to extend the metaphors, not by eliminating the ones already in use but by creatively adding to them. This might at least be done in communal prayer in which a variety of persons at various stages on the path to wholeness and conversion gather together. It takes planning and patience to do this, but so does reshaping existing prayer to be more neutral and inoffensive. Besides, the proliferation of titles can only enhance our image of God and, because they are so various, serve as a reminder that all we are about is metaphor.

NAMES IMPLY RELATIONSHIP

Until we come to the pinnacle of relationship, which is silence, the unspoken and inexplicable experience of one joined with another, we might do well to call God many things. In doing so we will call ourselves many things as we see ourselves in relationship to who we say God is. We will learn in that process about the fullness of Being who is God. What is more, we will learn about ourselves as we use this way of coming to our own fullness.

God and we are to be grappled with. Both the Divine and we can survive the contest, even be better for it. Let us continue to call God Father and Lord and King and Ruler. Let us add such other images as Mother, Life, Creation, Refuge, Rock, Deliverer, Shepherd, Door. Our personal contemplative life will grow; our communal prayer will be deeper and richer. And we will enjoy more surprises from a God our minds and hearts can never grasp.



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Spiritual Direction for Young Adults

Bill Edens, C.S.P., M.A., and Ken McGuire, C.S.P., Ph.D.

Group spiritual direction for adults allows more directees to benefit from a given spiritual director and allows the directees to benefit from each other's insights. Within the spiritual direction group of the faith community, members can share important dimensions of themselves in a trusting environment and confidential setting and can reflect together on the promptings of the Spirit.

We have been conducting such groups for the past dozen years and find that this method offers participants a chance to clarify inner promptings, connect with the richness of the Catholic tradition, draw from the wisdom of the group, and be reenergized for the journey of faith. Even persons who initially do not seek out individual sessions with a spiritual director are drawn into the process and often later seek individual counsel.

The role of the director in group spiritual direction is to set boundaries and limits in the group, model appropriate sharing, call for accountability in attendance, maintain contact with scripture and tradition, intervene in the conversation to draw out quieter members and slow down talkative members, and attend continuously to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Our groups meet for one and a half hours once a week for ten weeks (an academic quarter). We conduct three ten-week series a year. By the third meeting of the opening series, attendees must either make a commitment to attend all the remain-

ing sessions of that series or drop out of the group. Only those who participated in the first series of a group's meetings can participate in the second and third series for that group. We sometimes begin additional groups in the second academic quarter.

The rules of the group are simple: What you hear in the group is not to be repeated elsewhere; all talking must be personal sharing; everyone must talk. There is no pressure to reveal intimate details about one's life; the director models appropriate sharing. We emphasize the fact that we come to the group for each other; missing a session deprives the other members of one's presence. For young adults, the discipline of coming every week provides practice in making and keeping commitments—an essential skill for the spiritual life.

A common theme in the literature of Catholic spiritual direction is that self-knowledge is an important first step in the spiritual journey. If we believe that God leaves a divine imprint in the soul, then self-discovery is an important place to look for signs of God's presence.

STORYTELLING UNMASKS ILLUSIONS

For years our methodology in group spiritual direction revolved around storytelling. Each week we would announce a theme for the coming week. Often it was a single word, such as trust, fear, loneliness, or love. The homework was to reflect

during the week on that theme in relation to one's life and to come prepared to tell a story about it. During the session one person would tell a story while the others practiced active listening. They were free to ask questions or make comments on how the story related to the theme. As directors, we reflected back to the directees the deeper currents we recognized in their stories. If the theme that night was love, we might cite examples from scripture or the teachings of traditional and modern spiritual writers to help elucidate the differences between love and the many forms of nonlove that seem like love sometimes. We would then suggest questions the directees might want to ponder or avenues they might want to explore. The more skillful the director, and the better the director knew the directees, the more unmasking of illusions (and, hopefully, the more growth) took place. The longer the group was together, the more helpful the participants were to each other. The chief drawback to this method is the amount of time it takes—a year or more—to really know the directees.

INVENTORY OF VALUES

Four years ago we developed a new methodology that enables us to learn about the directees much more quickly. We administer the Hall Tonna Inventory of Values and then spend the first two quarters on the DISCERN process of understanding the inventory. The Hall Tonna Inventory is a paper-and-pencil forced-choice questionnaire of seventy-seven items. It is scored by computer, and the directee receives a printout. The printout gives a little information and raises a lot of discernment questions. It is confidential in that the true significance of the printout can only be understood by the directee in the light of his or her experience.

Whereas it would take a year or more of storytelling and discussion to know a directee's worldview and his or her significant questions, tensions, gifts, and weaknesses, this information is available through the inventory within the first few sessions.

The core of this process is a theory of values elucidated by Brian Hall in *The Genesis Effect*. The printout gives a ranking of one's values and leads one step by step through various patterns revealed in one's choice of values. Pattern perception is the principal motif. We human beings are information systems, but there is so much information available that we cannot understand it without knowing the patterns. The goal of the inventory is not to answer questions but to help the person raise important questions at this time in his or her life.

Hall and Tonna have put together the concept of values by utilizing insights from developmental psychology, traditional spiritual direction, and sociological systems theory in a way that is intuitively very satisfying. The Maslow hierarchy of

needs—physiological (hunger, sex, thirst), safety (security, stability, etc.), belongingness and love, esteem (achievement, competency, recognition, appreciation), and self-actualization—take one a little over halfway through the Hall Tonna schema. Kohlberg's highest stage of moral decision making—making universal moral choices—is about three-quarters of the way through the Hall Tonna schema. What makes the Hall Tonna approach innovative is its consideration of the individual in relationship with institutions and other social structures. The stages move from simplicity to complexity, from personal concerns of survival to social interaction, self-actualization and service, care for wider social systems, and global awareness. The most complex stage of development is reserved for individuals who collaborate with others for change of world order and preservation of the cosmos.

THEORY LINKS DISCIPLINES

The theory is remarkably comprehensive and inclusive. It provides a satisfying theoretic framework for understanding the links among psychology, theology, organizational development, and personal development theories. It is based on the Jungian belief that within each person there is an inner world of motivations, images, and visions that influences and is influenced by the outer world of people and institutions. Values are the mediators between the inner and outer world, and as such have two poles of meaning—a subjective pole and a behavioral pole. Hall believes that we can measure our values by the dual process of comparing our behavior with a defined standard and reflecting on our subjective motivations in relation to that standard. For example, the behaviors of empathy, such as active listening, questioning, and paraphrasing, must accompany the motivation of being empathetic.

There is a similarity between values and virtues. To have the virtue of love, we must both have the desire to love and do loving things. Virtues become habitual by repeated practice. Values are similar in that we can only say we have a value when we perform the actions associated with it. This is a refreshing change from the common definition of values implied by the remark "You have your values, I have mine," in which values are seen as completely subjective. It takes certain skills to practice the values. As we grow in life we must incorporate relatively simple values such as self-preservation and security, and gradually incorporate more complicated values such as family belonging, work confidence, and self-actualization.

Values are smaller building blocks of behavior than virtues. The virtue love is represented by a cluster of values. At an early stage of development, a child may express love by doing what his or her

Spiritual maturity comes only when we can live with tensions and ambiguities

parents ask him or her to do as a member of the family. The values of family belonging, care and nurture, duty, and self-control would be components of love at this stage in life. At a more complex stage, a woman may express love by sharing her deepest thoughts and feelings with her lifetime partner in a mutual and ongoing way. Complex values build on more simple values, so the woman must continue practicing the values learned earlier in life (family belonging, care and nurture, etc.), as well as newer values such as self-expression, empathy, service, and intimacy. As this same woman develops an interest in serving God's children outside her family, she may begin practicing even more complicated values of dignity, justice, new order, or even world ecology.

According to Hall's theory, values never act alone; they act in concert. We can learn to read the harmonies and disharmonies, the progressive and regressive combinations. Certain clusters of values give rise to particular worldviews and images of God. I may view the world as an alien place and God as a tyrant, or I may see the world as a mystery that I help God to care for, depending on my worldview.

PROGRESS THROUGH CYCLES

By the choices one makes in filling out the inventory, one places oneself in a cycle of human and spiritual development. Tasks for growth are suggested regarding one's view of the world and one's view of God, what skills to learn, and what pitfalls to avoid. The danger is that directees begin comparing themselves with others in the group or with a cherished image of self. It is important at this

point to assure the group members that no one cycle is better than any other. The integration of thoughts, actions, skills, emotions, the self and others, the personal and the institutional, and one's secular and spiritual dimensions at one's current cycle is more important than moving on to the next cycle. Also, it is important to stress that the instrument is not foolproof. On a bad day we may test a cycle or two low. On a good day we may test a cycle or two high. We encourage our directees to accept the probability that this instrument will reveal important patterns of their lives to them, and to let go of the fear that it will pigeonhole them.

Hall believes that progression through the cycles is usually sequential, but not always from the simple to the more complex. Illness or severe stress can cause us to move back to a more basic cycle as we deal with threats to our security and self-preservation.

He calls the cycle in which we are actively growing the focus area. All cycles more basic than this are in what he calls the foundation area. All cycles more complex than the focus area belong to the future area. The values in the future area provide us with inspiration and motivation. When we master the skills and integrate the behaviors at a given cycle, we may move on to the next, more complicated cycle. Hall cautions, however, that this is not an automatic occurrence and may take some pulling from someone in the same cycle or a more complex one. If and when we move to a more complicated cycle, the previous cycle is added to our foundation area.

An occupational hazard for us on the faith journey is that we get caught up in the vision of what can be and what we want to be, to the detriment of living what is. Reflection on inventory results in the group helps get us out of the clouds and back to where our developmental tasks lie. The genius of the instrument lies in its perspective. We don't have to let go of the future, but we can recognize it as the future and put our energy into the area of focus for present growth. The director might bring up the New Testament image of the man who built his house on a solid foundation (Matt. 7:24).

LEAVE QUESTIONS UNANSWERED

After this overview, directees are ready to reflect on the list of discernment questions generated by the values they picked and included in the printout. The questions to focus on are those that catch our interest, that express a need or desire that is not receiving attention. We emphasize that directees are not to answer the questions but to live with them as unanswered questions and to be challenged by them. This is an important teaching in our culture, which stresses instant answers. Spiritual maturity comes only when we can live with tensions and ambiguities.

On newsprint mounted on the walls, the directees write their questions, and the whole group helps find patterns and convergences. Through discussion we identify areas of congruence and incongruence, and the members tend to agree with what the group has noticed about them. They also learn much about themselves by seeing the patterns in others' lives. This teaches an important lesson in confirmation: when different sources of information tell me the same things, they confirm what I need to pay attention to. It is also important for directees to realize that to a large extent they are open books. Everyone else is reading them and can see things they thought they were keeping to themselves ("Everyone else is reading your book—why be the last one to read it?" we say). After seeing the patterns, the group sums up the major learnings of the session. We spend the first quarter on these discernment questions, letting everyone have a turn at writing theirs on the board. Again, the emphasis is on finding patterns, not on solving problems or answering questions.

In the second quarter we look at the priority ranking of the values. Using a process called value dialectics, or value dialogues, we reorganize the values for greater efficiency and rewrite the convergence statement. This is a shorter process and only takes half the quarter. Then we develop action plans, which are strategies for developing new habits for integrating the new values in one's life.

PRESUPPOSITIONS OF METHOD

There is a presupposition that the journey of faith follows an interior landscape that has certain broad developmental features. One has certain development tasks at identifiable places in the journey, and one's human energy is more profitably expended on those tasks rather than on the tasks that will be important at other times in life. We presuppose that

- healthy spirituality builds on healthy psychology;
- the humanistic psychologists are right in positing a hierarchy of needs, and one can best contribute to building up the body of Christ if one takes care of oneself;
- the Spirit guides a person to use God-given gifts for the good of the person and the world;
- the integration of greater complexity of skills and worldview allows one to gain more of God's perspective, and this progressive divinizing is a proper goal of spiritual direction.

Ignatius of Loyola was the best psychologist of his day. He knew the difficulty of discriminating (discerning) the natural movements of the psyche from the authentic promptings of the Holy Spirit. A wise and experienced director can help a person avoid many pitfalls.

The Hall Tonna instrument is no substitute for a

good director who has experience in leading people. It can help in developing self-knowledge, the first movement in direction. It is primarily a tool for interpreting the patterns inherent in the choices we make, which helps us find suitable questions to ponder at a given point in our lives.

STRENGTHS OF METHOD

Use of the Hall Tonna method promotes the development of self-knowledge, provides information to the director, and offers the group members a system for growth. It is an incorporative theory with great organizing and interpretive powers; it provides a map of one's interior territory, connecting one with psychological and spiritual traditions; it provides one with pertinent questions to explore; it has a strong intuitive fit; it provides a common language for the discussion of transcendence; it is ecumenical, integrates everyday life with the life of the spirit, and helps focus energy, making idealism more practical; it helps develop the practice of meditation, which ideally might lead to a hunger for solitude.

WEAKNESSES OF METHOD

The Hall Tonna instrument lacks overt connection with traditional God language and does not offer specific suggestions for the development of one's prayer life or relationship with God. Its appeal is mainly to persons in cycle 4—literate, searching persons who have had an experience of relativism. The spiritual director must be very adroit at reading the clues in people's behaviors and words to get to their true significance. People can "fool" the inventory and appear to be at a more complex cycle than they really are. The director can spot this and sensitively bring people to this realization. The instrument is not foolproof in assigning cycles of development, either. Hall says that people under 24 tend to choose the values of their parents in filling out the inventory, even though they are not realistically able to live those values yet. For instance, one university student's inventory put him in cycle 5, the communal collaborative cycle. After reading the description of his worldview, he felt that he would be "standing on his tip-toes" to live it and that the description of cycle 3, the institutional cycle, seemed more applicable to him. In attempting to select discernment questions, he found the questions in his foundation area to be the most interesting. This suggested that he wanted very much to be at a future level but that his real-life concerns were at a more basic level. He stayed in the spiritual direction group, and when he took the instrument again the next year, it put him in cycle 4, the intrapersonal cycle. Last but not least, the inventory costs \$25 per person, and it probably has a masculine hierarchical bias.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION TRADITION

In the traditional schema for the life of perfection, there are three movements: the purgative, the illuminative, and the unitive. These movements are concerned not with the acquisition of knowledge but with the forgetting of knowledge and the development of an ardent love of God. According to Kenneth Leech in *Experiencing God*, "this approach presumes persons have made some progress in the spiritual life, and have been drawn into some degree of solitude." Our method helps in developing the discipline of setting aside reflective time with the hope that a thirst for more solitude will develop.

The Hall Tonna inventory has a prophetic dimension in that it helps the directee move toward an outward focus: care and concern for God's people and God's creation and for building authentic community in which each member is valued as an individual. It has a social dimension in that the promise of a new order of dignity and justice can only be achieved when the individual is bound to a faith community that consciously strives for union with the Ground of all being.

Jungian in inspiration, the Hall Tonna instrument has the same benefits and drawbacks as all derivatives of Jungian thought. Jung provides a mapping of the region of interiority, giving us a conceptual framework for exposing illusions, uncovering blockages, and enlarging areas of conscious choice in one's life. However, Jung also has the tendency to relativize God as simply an aspect of the psyche. The spiritual director must consistently remind the directees that the Hall Tonna inventory is simply a tool to help in early adult phases of the spiritual journey.

As Kenneth Leech points out in *Spirituality and Pastoral Care*, spiritual direction "is concerned with insight which can discern between true spirituality and false, between reality and illusion, between paths which lead to maturity and wholeness, and those which lead to only destruction and death." Our method helps in two ways. First, it helps unmask our illusions about what values we are living. Second, our values always work together, and this method reveals discernible patterns. Some patterns lead to integration, life and wholeness; others lead to disintegration and destruction.

Leech warns about seeing spirituality as the acquisition and application of spiritual skills and techniques. We take this critique seriously, since the Hall Tonna instrument emphasizes development of skills. Without skills, we cannot live the values. Our perspective is that since grace builds on nature, developing the skills for healthy human development (which includes self-transcendence)

seems to be a prerequisite for healthy spiritual development. However, the danger is always present that directees will equate psychological growth with spiritual growth. The director must continually locate this tool in the wider movement of spirituality, which is always a response to the gracious initiative of God.

FOLLOW-UP TO METHOD

It takes two academic quarters for young adults to become comfortable with the language of the Hall Tonna inventory. In the third quarter we return to the storytelling method described at the beginning of this article, asking the participants to bring in scripture readings and describe experiences that exemplify a given theme for them. As they tell their stories and explain the importance of their scripture readings, they turn naturally to the value language to describe the inner and outer components of the experience, as well as to identify foundational, focus, and future elements. We believe that the direction in which these young adults are called by the Spirit of God is more readily perceived with the greater awareness of interior and exterior terrain that they gain through this method.

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Seeing with the Heart

Nicholas Harnan, M.S.C., M.A.

Once a group of tourists got hopelessly lost among back roads. At last they encountered a local inhabitant and tried to get directions to the main road. Although the local man did his best, one of the angry tourists could not resist making this parting comment: "Since coming to this country of yours we have met nothing but idiots. But you beat them all." "That might be so, sir," replied the local man, "but I am not lost."

The story suggests that expertise in particular situations is not always appreciated. This may be because we have a restricted understanding of expertise and, as a consequence, our appreciation of the challenge of certain situations may be likewise restricted. Our local guide was able to direct the tourists out of the maze of back roads and back onto the main highway, but how many people in the world today would appreciate this as a skill? Most people are impressed by such expertise as working with computers, flying an airplane, or performing surgery. And yet, is not an ability to know by heart the intricate network of back roads something to be appreciated in its own right? The question we might reflect on is this: If this particular skill is not generally appreciated in our world

today, are there other skills that are also being ignored? For instance, some people, insignificant in the world's eyes, possess wisdom of inestimable value. But we pass them every day without so much as a glance.

EXPERIENCE TEACHES WISDOM

The gift of wisdom was very much appreciated in the past. It is less appreciated today because of the availability of so many experts and specialists in particular fields. Wisdom is not a specialist gift, confined to a definite category such as morphology or carpentry. It is more diffuse and tends to permeate the whole of one's life. There is no specialized course of study or designated center offering tuition in this area. Wisdom can be learned only from constant exposure to the buffeting of experience on the back roads of life—roads that must be traveled without maps or signposts.

The word wisdom comes from the Latin word *videre*, "to see." Wisdom has a lot to do with seeing what is essential in life—for example, the order God has established in the world to nurture life, or the path he has laid down for each of us to become the person he has called us to be. Sometimes we realize with a start that someone in our midst, with very little formal education—someone not rated highly by the world—is able to see clearly something the world cannot see. In the midst of the

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equipped with
information lack basic
skills and knowledge
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in a library or
university**

confusion of roads competing for our attention, they are able to recognize the path that leads to God. This kind of seeing is the wisdom buried in our hearts, the wisdom we must begin to recover if we want to see our road ahead of us. Since growth in wisdom is lived and experienced rather than analyzed or speculated on, it is difficult to describe or define it. A story may be helpful as a first step in demonstrating its existence.

I went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land a few years ago. A day was set aside for experiencing the desert. An air-conditioned bus drove us to the edge of the desert, which was conveniently marked by a large hotel. Here we were presented with our first option. Those of us who wished to have our desert experience indoors did so in the comfort of the hotel lounge, which looked out onto the desert. Those of us who wished to brave the outdoors walked about a quarter of a mile to a prominent monument erected by the Israelis to commemorate the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. Once there, we were presented with another option. We could remain in the shade of the monument or fan out alone in different directions for forty minutes of meditation. On no account was anyone to wander too far from the watchful eye of the guide.

As I sat on a rock, fighting back the fear of desolation, I saw a Bedouin woman riding a donkey a short distance away. She seemed to appear out of nowhere. I watched her as she weaved her way through the small sand dunes and headed into the limitless desert before her. She made no attempt to check her bearings against the monument. As she became a tiny black speck on the horizon, the daring of her journey hit me. Before moving back to the security of the monument I walked out to

inspect the path, which I had presumed was capable of carrying this lady into a frightening wilderness. All I could see were faint hoofprints fading rapidly into the shifting sands. Soon there would be no trace of the Bedouin woman on the donkey.

Later that evening, on the bus bringing us back from the desert, I spoke to the driver, who was familiar with the Bedouin way of life. I was intrigued to know how the woman could travel through the desert without the aid of a path. He simply said, "But she can see a path."

We live in a world that offers many artificial adventures. We can have the experience without the hardship that was once an integral part of the adventure. We can be transported to the Holy Land in comfort, in a matter of hours; in days gone by the same journey might have taken a lifetime. The wilderness of the desert can be viewed from a hotel lounge. When we do venture outside the hotel to gingerly explore the edge of this wilderness, we remain cosseted within the shadow of a gigantic manmade monument to ensure maximum protection against a few yards of rock and sand. Intellectually, we know a great deal about the desert. This information is neatly catalogued in our magnificent libraries. Yet who among us can reclaim the ancient skill of crossing a desert alone and unaided? Who among us is impressed to realize that at one time our ancestors made such journeys frequently, long before modern navigational aids were invented? Today, if we came upon such a person, would we be impressed? Probably not. This astonishing skill, this ancient form of wisdom, would most likely be reduced to a quaint accomplishment of an insignificant Bedouin people on the remote fringe of our technological society.

Today our conventional knowledge has become so conceptualized and systematized that we can traverse the entire world in the comfort and security of a well-appointed study. We can return from adventurous expeditions in libraries and centers of learning, scarcely having acquired a speck of dust in the journey. Yet we who are so well equipped with information lack basic skills and knowledge possessed by those who may never set foot in a library or university. In listening to people struggling with basic human issues in their lives, I sometimes uncover something rather strange. So many of these people have received all the benefits of our modern educational systems, yet they are poorly informed about fundamental laws of ordinary and everyday experiences.

This is not to say that countless people who, for various reasons, have been catapulted out of their intellectual security into the uncharted desert of a terrifying experience—the loss of a loved one, of health, of a job, of reputation, or simply of nerve—in a quiet and unassuming way, with no specialist help, manage to find their path in life again. Such people develop a wisdom that is sim-

ply a knowledge of the journey, developed during the journey itself. Sadly, it often goes unappreciated because it is usually developed in situations that are beyond the superficial comprehension of our technological age.

IMPEDIMENTS TO WISDOM

Several aspects of our society are obstacles to the cultivation of wisdom. First, we have a tendency to overconceptualize. We live in a world that has succeeded in harnessing many of the forces of our planet. Our advances give evidence to a highly cultivated functional capacity and a highly developed possessive ego. As we will see, this kind of development caters to only one dimension of our being. The educational system that promotes this type of character formation tends to ignore any areas of our being that do not directly promote technological progress. To increase the power of the intellect, everything is directed toward abstraction, intellectualization, and a focus on conceptual order. Other human capacities, such as imagination and intuition, tend to be ignored. Our present cultural and spiritual poverty stems from excessive use of an isolated intellect. God intends this wonderful gift of our intellect to be used in harmonious cooperation with other vital capacities. It is no mere coincidence that children, before being put through our modern educational machine, possess these qualities of imagination and intuition in abundance. It is sad to realize that in submitting our children to an intensive exposure to conceptualization, we are stunting other capacities that would enable them to see the world in a holistic manner.

Second, we rely too much on experts. In our world of modern conveniences, experts are always readily available. The cultivation of experts has made possible the tremendous surge in development. Too-ready access to experts, however, can rob us of certain hidden gifts that contribute to the cultivation of wisdom. An elevator might be a great gift to people who have long stairways to climb or who suffer from certain physical disabilities. If we use an elevator all the time, however, we lose an opportunity for healthful physical exercise. In like manner, if someone does our thinking, searching, and discerning for us, we lose the capacity to engage life courageously. We must be cautious before turning over our lives, or certain elements of our lives, to people who are only too willing to take charge. In all matters that have a bearing on our personal growth and development, we must invest a generous amount of energy in prayer and heartfelt searching before turning to an expert. And even then, we must guard carefully against being taken over. We use the expert to clarify options but retain the sacred exercise of decision for ourselves.

Another way in which the challenge to develop

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turning to an expert**

wisdom can be taken away from us is through our excessive reliance on institutions and/or organizations. I specifically mention institutions because of the considerable number of religious people I meet who have poor personal autonomy or capacity for discernment. Being trapped into institutional thinking, however secure it might feel, can rob us of the oldest gift of the human family: the ability to see the path with one's own eyes and heart and to have the courage to follow it.

We have also lost the ability to listen creatively. Among wise helpers and professional listeners, creative listening is described as "listening with the third ear." This is listening with the ear of our heart, a skill not easily described. It has something to do with reflective living. It involves seeing a person not as a machine with buttons to be pressed but as a sacred world in which one struggles to bring God's order out of temporary chaos. Each of us has the wisdom and the capacity to allow God to bring about order in our turbulent lives. We do not need other people to put our world together according to their designs, however neat their personal order may be. But we do need the support, space, and freedom to tour our chaotic house in the company of a compassionate friend and try to see the design for ourselves. In this listening exercise we can be certain that God is with us, because he has already begun this restorative and healing task.

In his book *The Little Prince*, Antoine de Saint Exupéry devised a test in order to determine who had real understanding of life. It was a drawing of an elephant inside a boa constrictor. To people young at heart, who still saw life through the eyes of wisdom, it was easy to identify the living creatures involved. To others the picture had no life.

Obstacles to Cultivating Wisdom

- (1) Fostering overconceptualization.
- (2) Neglect of imagination and intuition.
- (3) Relying too much on experts.
- (4) Excessive dependence on institutions and organizations.
- (5) Inability to listen creatively (i.e., with the heart responding to God).

These people claimed that it represented a hat. How do we explain the difference in perceptions?

As human beings, we do not live in a vacuum. We try to relate to our environment, make sense of it, and learn to move in it as securely and as comfortably as possible. This is the ancient human process of adaptation. We learn how to exist in and relate to our world in such a way as to enhance our chances of survival. We develop a pattern of responses that occur mostly unconsciously and automatically as situations demand, in order to protect ourselves against potential threats to our well-being. To appreciate how important this is, let us consider the following example. If I were transported to a large and hostile jungle and abandoned there, it is doubtful that I would survive. I have not developed an adequate pattern of automatic responses to ensure my survival in such an environment.

PERCEPTUAL MODELS IMPORTANT

These responses are not just behaviors and feelings. They are also ways of looking at the world—

perceptual models by which we assess our environment. These perceptual models are so important that many people get involved in their formation—parents, teachers, political and religious leaders. The degree to which each of these agencies can fashion the way we look at the world is the degree of their control over us. I have vivid memories of my parents worrying about “strange ideas” I had picked up as a child. The only thing strange about them was that they were slightly different from the ideas accepted in my home. My parents lost no time in hammering my perceptual models back into shape. My parish priest was likewise very concerned about a friendship I had with a boy of a different religious persuasion. He was afraid that this boy would fill my head with “funny ideas.” This priest was concerned that my perceptual models would lose some of their traditional Catholic shape and that if this happened he might lose me.

We must never underestimate the power of early perceptual models. They are often reinforced in situations in which control rather than authentic growth is promoted. Sadly, for some of us, much of our education and formation, both secular and

religious, was geared toward reinforcing simplistic ways of seeing the world. This happened especially if these ways of perceiving reality also reinforced a particular agency's power and control over us. Approval was dependent upon our conforming to what was presented as the correct way of seeing things. These perceptual models gradually became enmeshed with our early identity and underpinned the false self.

This may explain why prejudices and biases can be so passionately defended. When our belief system or perceptual models are attacked we mistakenly think that we are being personally attacked. Some of us reach adulthood and even old age still influenced by crude perceptual models that persist from an earlier age in spite of our having received a good conventional education. A formation process with a strong emphasis on authentic growth and development seems required to eradicate the inaccurate elements of our perceptions. This formation does not necessarily take place in a formal educational setting. Some people who received very little formal education in their earlier years manage to refine their way of viewing the world and allow themselves to be formed in God's image. Perhaps they were exposed to challenging experiences that revealed the inadequacies of their early perceptual models.

I have introduced the issue of perceptual models in order to illustrate how our conventional education systems may reinforce these crude ways of seeing the world. When this happens, wisdom has little chance of being cultivated. If we regard wisdom as the capacity to see the world close to the way God intends us to see it, then we can understand why unchallenged perceptual models are the enemy of wisdom. A readiness to be challenged about our perceptual models opens us up to truth and to God speaking to us in our experience.

While Jesus did not use the term *perceptual models*, he was nevertheless concerned about their power to obstruct his message. If I am in the grip of unchallenged ways of seeing the world, then I am blinkered and blind. Jesus referred to this type of blindness and the extent of its bad influence in the gospels. In Matthew we read, "The lamp of the body is the eye. It follows that if your eye is sound, your whole body will be filled with light. But if your eye is diseased, your whole body will be all darkness. If then, the light inside you is darkness, what darkness that will be!" (Matt. 6:22–23).

WISDOM GIVES SIGHT

We have been considering wisdom, what constitutes it, and what obstructs its development. It all has to do with seeing with the heart. As the fox in *The Little Prince* so wisely said, "And now here is my secret, a very simple secret: It is only

with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye." The good news is that what is essential is right before our eyes, and wisdom enables us not to miss it—which reminds me of a story.

There was a very sharp customs officer at a customs post on the border between the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland. He had a reputation for being able to detect even the smartest attempts at smuggling. One particular case gave him considerable unease. Each day a man would arrive by bicycle, loaded down with parcels. Each day the customs officer would make him open all the parcels. Inside these parcels were old newspapers. The customs officer was quite certain that he was missing something, but through years of checking he never found anything.

Years later, after this officer had retired from the customs service, he met his cyclist friend in a public house. They got talking over a drink. Finally, the retired officer asked a straight question. "Mike," he said, "you were smuggling something—what was it?" "Bicycles," came the amused reply.

REFLECTION EXERCISES

1. Try to identify some insights that you have learned from experience. (How many more insights can you learn from this kind of reflective exercise?)
2. Try to become more conscious of your intuitive capacity when tackling problems. Check some of your reasoned decisions against your first intuitive hunches in order to reinforce this intuitive capacity.
3. How comfortable are you in owning your own decisions after prudent consultation?
4. When you next listen to someone, try to hear the message behind the words spoken. Also, reflect on some of your past conversations in order to discern what you were really trying to say.
5. Are you able to identify certain perceptions about which you tend to become defensive? Are you willing to explore the backgrounds of your rigid perceptions in order to widen your perspective?
6. Pray often for the gift of wisdom—"Lord, that I may see as you see."



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Authority with Credibility

George B. Wilson, S.J.

Some heavy thinkers opine that our church faces an authority crisis. You'll hear them referring to "pick-and-choose" Catholics. This put-down label is used to cast persons who are seriously searching to respond to the Lord as selfish or individualistic simply because they do not uncritically buy everything presented to them by people in positions of responsibility within the church community. We need to examine the mentality that undergirds such labels. Accepting a distorted assessment of our situation could lead us to focus our energies in the wrong places. In short, we could come up with the right answer to the wrong question.

Apparently, the first thing we need to do is to explore what people are talking about when they speak of authority. They could mean one of two quite different things. The first is a form of power residing in one person or corporate body as a result of the codified norms of a community. In this case authority is an ability to create specific consequences in the life of another. One party has the right to demand compliance from another with respect to some prescription. In the church it could be the power to restrict a person's access to the sacraments, or the power to allow one to become a registered member of a church congregation, or the power to appoint the leader of a parish or a diocese. Whether or not the other party agrees with, much less likes, the prescription of the authority figures(s) is irrelevant. The power is there and affects the public order of the church. Author-

ity in this context is impersonal; it operates quite apart from the relationships among affected parties. The power of the subjects is restricted largely to choices to be made after the authority figure has acted.

The second version of authority is a power that one party possesses by virtue of the other party's trust. It is quite different from an impersonal power that functions regardless of the interpersonal dynamic among the parties involved. It is a power granted by one party because the behavior of the other party has earned it. As such, it is always in the process of being created and conferred. It is not a static quantity; it can be nurtured or allowed to wither. Though one might think that such an authority would be tenuous, the relationship is actually incredibly strong when it prevails, because it is always being freely offered and received. Because it is an interpersonal reality, both parties are mutually responsible for its nurturance and growth.

For the sake of simplicity, let us call the first reality *normative* or *legal* authority and the second *operative* or *relational* authority. The former is pretty cut-and-dried. It is the latter that calls for exploration.

THE ROLE OF CREDIBILITY

It should be evident that once we approach authority as an operative relationship freely under-

taken between persons, we enter into the realm of human trust. Consequently, we must reflect on credibility, which grounds trust. If operative authority is dependent on the performance of the two parties, we must ask ourselves: What behavior do we look for in those on whom we will confer the power to influence our personal decision making? And what behavior might they appropriately look for in us?

Perhaps the best way to uncover the criteria people use to answer the first question is to examine the language they use when they do not confer this power. People say things like: "I've given up on our director of religious education because you can't even talk with her. It's a monologue; she just doesn't listen to you." Or: "The bishops are hopelessly out of touch with the reality of married sex; I just ignore what they say on the subject." Or: "Our pastor talks a great game on things like social justice, but I'd sure like to be able to afford the kind of vacations he takes every year." Or: "I wish they'd stop worrying about altar girls and lead us in translating the gospel into reality in our lives."

Each of these comments indicates that a person with some degree of normative authority proves to have little or no relational authority because she or he is not credible to the other(s) in the relationship. Of course, the establishment of credibility is a complicated matter. The comments cited suggest at least four of the many elements that affect credibility.

Genuine Listening. Perhaps the most significant is evidence that those who claim authority are genuinely listening to those they wish to lead. To sense that one is not being listened to is to feel like a non-person in the presence of the authority figure. This experience destroys any possibility of conferring power or influence. A healthy self will respond with the God-given coping mechanism that protects it from such depersonalization: withholding the empowerment being claimed. This is what happened when Jesus recognized that Pilate was not really listening; he simply fell silent and denied Pilate the satisfaction of his claim.

In considering this element that affects credibility, the reflection questions for any person in leadership are quite obvious: Do I really make an effort to hear what my people are trying to communicate to me? Do I even know how to listen? Perhaps less obvious are the questions for the person being called to confer power on the leader: What behavior will satisfy my expectation of genuinely being listened to? Is the condition only verified when the leader agrees with me? Is my response framed in an adversarial, zero-sum game (i.e., either I get my way or I withdraw from the relationship with a claim of no dialogue)? Am *I* listening? The questions make it clear that the healthy conferral and acceptance of personal authority require continual

soul-searching and struggle for maturity and integrity in both parties. What grounds credibility is not pious exhortations by either party but evidence that the authority's listening has some effect on the way in which decisions are made, if not on the actual determination.

Contact with Reality. The second factor on which people base their assessments of an authority's credibility is contact with reality. Sincerity in one's effort to listen is not enough. Potential conferrers of authority judge the other party's realism and appreciation of what's going on. A negative assessment will provoke remarks like: "This guy's off the wall." "They're living in the sixteenth century." "His denial of reality is just monumental." In some cases the appraisal is quite general, touching on a total worldview. In others it is particularized: "I wonder if he can possibly imagine what it's like to try to live on \$14,000. He's so protected economically that he doesn't even know all the hidden benefits he's enjoying." Of course, similar assessments are made by the one in authority: "They haven't the foggiest idea of what it's like trying to accommodate the conflicting expectations of all the parishioners as well as my boss, the bishop."

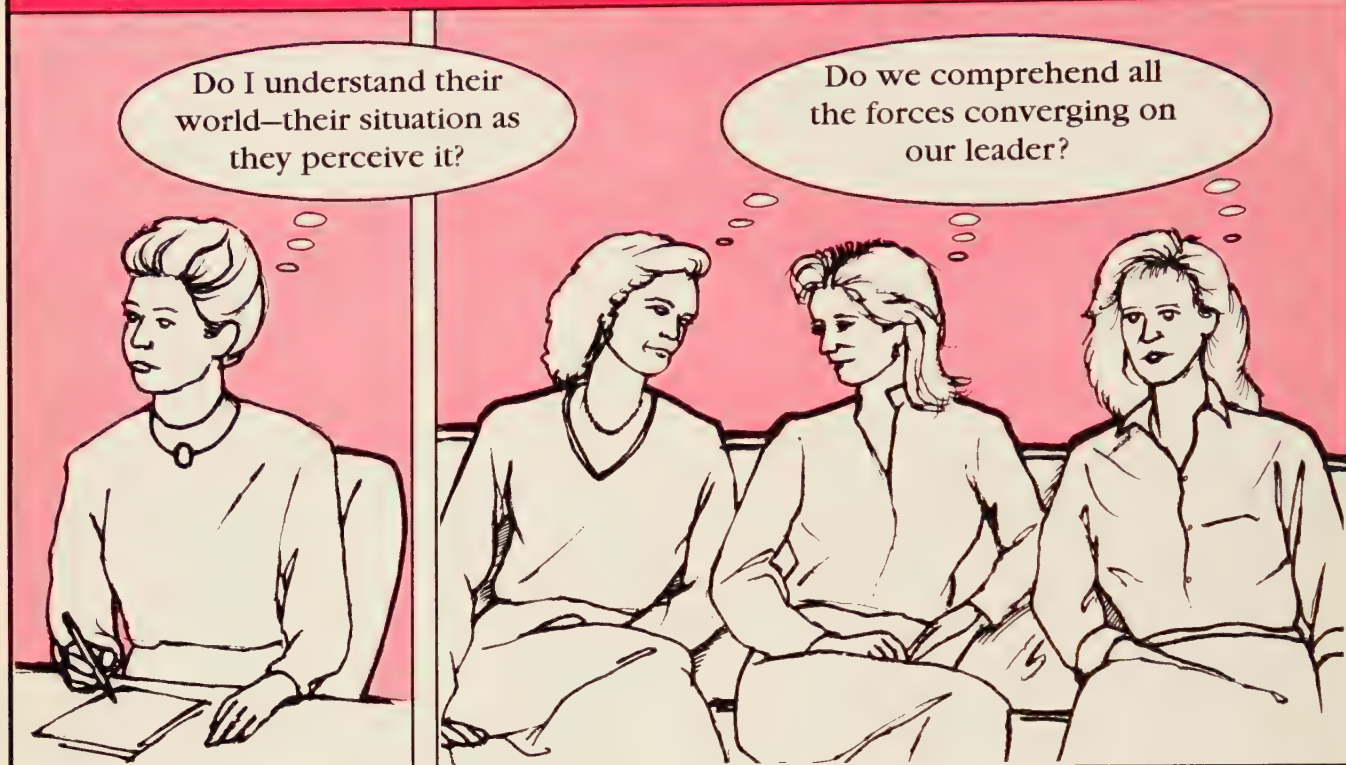
We touch here on the need for empathy, or active imagination, in the nurturing of a constructive authority relationship. The question is, Can I really say I appreciate what it's like to walk in the other person's sandals? Or is the complexity of reality so terrifying that I have to wall myself off from the perspective of the other? The parallel monologues that characterize so much of the abortion debate are prime examples of the lack of empathy. The need for empathy is evident in any genuine interpersonal relationship, and it is required in anyone who would ask another for authority.

Credibility arises from the subject's sense that the leader really understands the situation and his or her perspective on it. Thus, leaders need to ask themselves whether they know their subjects' world. Also, however, subjects must ask themselves how well they comprehend all the forces converging on their leader, who must make complex decisions for the good of the total social system.

Consonance of Word and Deed. Credibility may not be gained, even by empathetic listening, unless the subject perceives that the leader genuinely lives out the values that the subject is expected to embrace. In other words, the subject must perceive a consonance between the leader's proclamations and his or her actions. Many leaders in both civil and religious society possess no operative authority because their behavior shows that their rhetoric is mere ideological posturing.

This point is evident in many contexts. A clarion call to solidarity with the poor loses some of its clarity when the bugler is wearing French cuffs—

Questions Leaders and Subjects Must Ask



regardless of whether the bugler is a superior or a subject. People familiar with twelve-step spirituality alert us to those who talk the talk but don't walk the walk. (Eliza Doolittle puts it directly to Professor Higgins: "Don't talk of love lasting through time; *show me*—now!"). The one who understood best what genuine authority-through-credibility is all about, Jesus of Nazareth, saved his harshest barbs for those leaders who heaped burdens on others but did not lift a finger themselves. Lest we forget, however, he was no less demanding when he held the mirror up to the passive-aggressive conduct of those never satisfied by anyone else's claim to leadership.

The subject who wants to be sure before conferring authority is confronted with the same disturbing question that is asked of the authority figure: How many of my proclaimed values are genuine, and how many are simply disguised self-interest? An inordinate focus on keeping the outside of the cup shiny seems to characterize many persons—normative authorities as well as those called to work with them.

Focus on the Center. A fourth factor affecting the dynamics of relational authority is the question around which it is exercised. Subjects find author-

ity figures noncredible when they lose focus on what is central to the mission of the community and instead attempt to direct energies toward what is felt to be at best peripheral and possibly not even on the gospel map. When Captain Queeg on the good ship *Caine* wants to know who has taken the strawberries, we may not be able to predict a mutiny, but we know that the captain is off course and that he and his crew are headed for foul weather. Closer to what some people would call real life, Jimmy Carter apparently devoted precious presidential energies to refereeing tiffs about who had access to the White House tennis courts.

The issue of focus becomes critical when those in authority not only use their valuable energies on peripheral details but also use their normative authority to dictate how others should behave with respect to central questions. When authority figures try to codify expected behaviors on matters that would more effectively be left for those involved to struggle with, they lower the probability that they will be listened to when the real wolf rounds the corner. The determination of whether or not to have altar girls at masses is symbolic of such eccentric uses of authority in matters of church life. A little regulating goes a long way. Even the old code recognized this as a foundational principle:

odiosa sunt restringenda. It is one thing for a pastor to be concerned about sexual morality, but quite another to forbid Communion to a woman wearing attire that wouldn't titillate even the most prurient adolescent. Rather than strengthen a leader's authority, such actions simply disclose his or her own hang-ups.

The questions for any authority figure who wants to be able to lead are simple: Over what issues is it worthwhile to risk the precious commodity of credibility? For what matters will I save the valuable currency of authority so that I will be genuinely heeded when I decide that those matters call for action? Which of the behaviors that raise some healthy tensions within the Lord's people are at best merely the outside of the cup? Does the bishop use leadership energies to keep tabs on the priest who wears tennis shoes at mass or to focus on the priest whose caustic high-handedness has destroyed the community life of the last three parishes he has pastored? As far as we can tell from the gospel accounts, Jesus apparently paid far less attention to sexual morality than he did to the risks attendant to worldly wealth. What's more important to the mission?

Like the other three components of credibility, focus forces a question on the subject who confers authority: When I critique authority figures' misguided sense of priorities, am I always absolutely sure that I am right about what is central and what is peripheral to the gospel and the mission of the church? Like the authority figure, the subject is faced with the same demanding task of discerning between good and evil, and apparently prone to the same distortions caused by disordered self-interest. Paradoxically, subjects are capable of laying burdens on superiors and not lifting a finger to help.

IMPLICATIONS FOR STRATEGY

Our reflections may seem to have taken us far from our original question: Is there a crisis of authority in our church? It is time to draw some implications from these wanderings.

One conclusion might be that the crisis has been misnamed. Normative authority is still pretty well in place and not much at risk. The crisis is one of interpersonal authority, and that translates into a crisis of credibility. Many authority figures have little impact because they simply are not credible to their people.

A second conclusion might be that all of us in the church share responsibility for the situation. Authority figures are partly responsible because they have taken their authority for granted on the basis of legal title; they have not worked at earning credibility by listening and entering into the real life of their people, have not modeled continued conversion in their own lives, and have focused on nonessentials while avoiding the central demands

of the gospel. The subjects who grant authority are partly responsible for most of the same reasons.

A third implication would seem to be that a focus on the rights of church subjects is not a very productive strategy for the healing and growth of our church. Concentrating on rights assumes that great abuses of normative authority are going on. It's quite possible, however, that church authorities, rather than abusing their legitimate authority, are squandering their potential for leading a community. Authority is not abused when Rome decides to readmit two married priests in Brazil to active ministry, as long as they refrain from sexual relations with their wives, yet holds the line for mandatory celibacy as a general policy; it is simply wasted on foolishness and hypocrisy. Authority is not abused but simply wasted when bishops pillory an elected public official who comes to a different prudential judgment on public policy in the area of abortion but blithely look the other way when Catholic legislators vote billions of dollars to arm the world's bullies at the expense of the poor. It is also wasted when church leaders write off protestations about women's exclusion and marginalization by the church as feminist rhetoric so they won't have to listen and perhaps be converted.

The primary issue is not rights in the church. Concentrating on rights is only buying into the ideology of those whom one has cast as adversaries. It only reinforces the notion that law is the central focus of church life and will be its salvation. We may need people to speak out about genuine abuses of authority in the church, but the real issue is deeper than that. Now, as always, it is an issue of spirituality, of painful personal and interpersonal conversion, of the uprooting of self-deceptive attitudes on the part of superiors and subjects alike.

The issue, to put it in other terms, is really the internal evangelization of all of us. Not evangelization in the sense of securing new church members; that's just churchification. Nor even evangelization in the sense of becoming a more cohesive body as church; that's meatier, but it's still ecclesialization at best. Evangelization is about something at once more rich and more penetrating. It's about being transformed by the Good News that challenges all vested self-interest and causes us to die—and confers on us a freedom and joy that lies beyond rights because it is a supremely free gift.



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Renewing Religious Communities

Jonathan Clark, Ed.D.

The more a community grows, the more attention must be paid to the evolution of its structures. . . . Evolution of structures is possible because the community is becoming larger and its members are growing spiritually; they are deepening in their commitment and so able to assume increasing responsibility. At l'Arche, we work over our constitution fairly regularly, and that seems worthwhile. My own fear is that some communities stifle their members because they do not know how to modify their structures to enable the essential of the community to be better lived.

—Jean Vanier, *Community and Growth*

For several years I have conducted workshops designed to enrich life within religious communities, and the experience has changed my perception of the problems these groups face. This article describes the evolution of my understanding of the tensions between individual and institutional interests—tensions that can constrict the quality of community life.

FORMATIVE EXPERIENCES OF COMMUNITY

I dropped out of college for a year in the mid-1950s to live with three other men and a married

couple, all of whom led weekend workcamps for the Quakers in Philadelphia. Participants in the workcamps included students from local schools and colleges who spent a weekend living and working together, helping inner-city families paint, plaster, and wallpaper their apartments. While all the members of our small leadership community wished to promote communication and understanding in the inner-city society in which we lived, friction began to build among us. Differences of opinion about what issues to discuss at the workcamps and failure to coordinate basic household tasks bred feelings of alienation. It seemed easier to disband the group than to resolve the issues that divided us. Only financial considerations kept us in the same house.

Sensing the household's stress, our employer led a weekend retreat for us so we could share what had brought each of us to the community. The focus on our commitment rather than our shortcomings opened a channel of communication that enabled us to remain together for the rest of the year and put our collaborative work into perspective. While frictions continued to arise, being able to talk with each other helped us to respond constructively to problems rather than feel oppressed by them.

In annual reunions held since that year, we have come to realize that we were encountering stages of development experienced by all communities.

What had seemed to be insurmountable conflict had actually been our way of assuring that individual interests and needs would be acknowledged. The struggles helped us rework the structure of the community to allow fuller inclusion of each member. During the rest of the year our small and new community took on a variety of different forms as we sought a way of living together that was responsive to both individual and group needs.

The experience of living in a small community for a year exerted a powerful influence on me. In creating many team settings in my work as a teacher, psychologist, and consultant, and in endeavoring to help organizations manage both continuity and change, I have maintained an awareness of the difficulty organizations have in maintaining respect for the unique perceptions, style, and needs of each individual. In our community we had encountered resistance to change within ourselves and each other. But our community's age and size made it relatively easy for us to evaluate our life together and to experiment with change. How can communities whose members have lived together for as long as twenty or thirty years open themselves to the possibility of change?

SOME GUIDING PRINCIPLES

If everyone listens to each other's ideas, the truth will gradually and calmly emerge.

—Jean Vanier

Several years ago the master of postulants at a nearby monastery asked me to counsel a man experiencing difficulties in entering the community. Subsequently, the community asked me to design a training experience to help postulants manage the stresses of living with each other and with the rest of the community. The monastery's formation team felt that its introduction of postulants to community life did not adequately prepare them to integrate personal and common life. Discussions with the formation team led to the development of a two-day workshop on community living, offered to the postulants and interested community members.

The workshop revealed that both junior and senior members struggled to balance the need for privacy and autonomy with the commitment to community. While the community held regular meetings for postulants and members, these did not resolve tensions. Some individuals perceived their community as lacking a spirit of renewal; many expressed the desire for a way to bring people together. If members could experience individual and community needs as contributing to each other rather than as competing, they might be able to reaffirm the commitment to living together as brothers.

As we designed a program for renewing life within other religious communities, we identified

three goals. First, we sought to bring participants in touch with their own experience of community. Second, while respecting the members' privacy, we wanted them to share their experiences of community with each other. Finally, we wanted to use this communication as a basis for critically reviewing community life and for making plans for renewal.

Why focus on individual experience? Institutions such as the family and the religious community arise because people discover they can best meet their needs through involvement with others. At the formation of these institutions, people are clear about the relationship between what they seek and what they will contribute. The contract is clear. As these groups become institutionalized, however, people find that it is more difficult to bring about change. The organizations seem to gain a momentum independent of the members' experience. The visibility of these groups and their sense of mission make it increasingly difficult to acknowledge what the members feel. We believed that renewal of a religious community could be fostered by encouraging individuals to share their experience of community, unsuppressed by force of tradition or obligation to mission.

We sought to address the anticipated polarity between individuals and their communities. If participants could share experiences in the workshop, that might establish a precedent that would make it easier for them to communicate about common life. The workshop would incorporate three phases: the first evoking individual experiences, the second encouraging the sharing of these experiences, and the third providing opportunities for the discussion of experiences of common life. Having built such a base of communication, it might be possible to enter the second stage of renewing community: exploring how members can implement constructive change.

ENTERING THE COMMUNITY

As lay outsiders seeking to foster change, our manner of entry influences our effectiveness. Since we were coming into the community, we wanted to learn about members' expectations of the workshop. We also sought to create a vehicle for change with the members rather than to establish it before the workshop. These concerns led to planning meetings with the community. Instead of entering at the workshop, we chose to meet members under the more informal circumstances of planning. We wanted them to tell us how a workshop on communication could be useful. In this way we exchanged roles with them even before the workshop began: we became the learners, and they became the teachers. Planning itself thus became an intervention.

In meeting with community members we sought more than entry; we wanted to learn about community problems and the goals members sought to

As they begin to share their visions of community, members build connections between resources and possibilities

achieve through the workshop. We also wanted a response to our understanding of these expectations. This information would provide the basis for designing a specific plan.

In their desire to assist religious communities, many regard renewal as removing barriers between people to bring them closer together. Such a view oversimplifies the task. There is an optimal amount of distance between members of each community and for each relationship within the community at a given point in time. The distance needed by members constantly changes, as it does in any relationship. Rather than maintaining a given distance, healthy relationships within a community follow a natural rhythm, becoming closer or more distant, depending on factors such as the energy required for a mission, the quest for social or solitary rejuvenation, or the need to speak together or muse apart.

Though members of religious communities told us that there was "not enough closeness or sharing" within their group, we found that such a statement reflects a breaking down of functions that regulate the distance between members. Consequently, members begin to experience an inability to move closer together or further apart. Resulting feelings of entrapment and disempowerment may further erode confidence in the community.

DIMINISHMENT OF INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE

Individual experience, a monitor of distance regulation in community life, often becomes overwhelmed by other factors. For example, some members may desire to change the form of community prayer while others resist such change. In the

ensuing struggle, members may marshal the political forces necessary to push through or fend off the change. The exercise of power and resentment over its use are apt to surface. In the fray, consideration of each member's personal experience of forms of prayer may be supplanted by political allegiances. Those who lose encounter frustration; they feel that the community does not acknowledge their preferences. As a consequence, their confidence in their ability to fulfill their needs through interchange with the community may be eroded. Members cease to communicate with the group as a whole and turn to individual friendships or work, or in some cases withdraw into themselves. Each of these steps may attenuate the dialogue between personal experience and established structure. The community problem persists, unchecked by direct experience, and the cycle continues.

Because we viewed the generative community as one sustained by a dynamic tension between individual experience and established structure, we sought to restore a balance between the two. As some members appeared to have withdrawn from the rest of the community, we sought to enable individuals to share personal experiences without violating their privacy. Indeed, if we were to have violated their privacy (as was done in many of the encounter groups of the sixties and seventies), we would have exacerbated the very problem that we had been asked to resolve.

We sought to elicit the sharing of individual experience because it could provide an incentive for examining community life. As individuals recall their experiences and share them with others in nonthreatening ways, energy and optimism may emerge. The collective sharing of individual experience may also generate a map for deciding how life within the community can best be renewed. People may discover the style, the life, and the humor in themselves and in others that has been withheld.

WORK WITH COMMUNITIES

During subsequent years we have offered workshops to four different religious communities. At three of the communities we conducted follow-up workshops and assessed the impact of the initial efforts. Two provided pre- or post-novitiate formation, and two were composed of professed monks offering retreats or other services outside the community.

The follow-up workshops disclosed that despite our emphasis on preplanning, some community members were able to provide only a partial description of their problems. Difficulties in stating the problem stemmed from two sources: the fact that only one element of the community took responsibility for seeking outside help, and the limitations inherent in assessing one's own community.

In the formation communities, the senior members (who made initial contact with us) tended to view the problem differently than did the junior members. They felt that the junior members, preoccupied with a difficult year of training, tended to dismiss community life as a resource. Many junior members, in turn, cited the personalities of other community members, junior or senior, as obstacles to community.

While individual juniors tended to maintain a close relationship with at least one of the formators, a distance existed between the junior and senior groups. On one occasion we began the workshop after two planning sessions with the formators and discovered that all junior members had been told that the event to which they were coming was a retreat. The formators told us they were fearful that the juniors would be opposed to a workshop addressing relations within the community.

The difficulty in objectively looking at one's own community reflects a basic human tendency. It is easier to look outward at the mission of a community than inward to enhance communication. For many members, tending to the community's mission offered relief from the more painful and diffuse problems of relationships with fellow members. One superior who spent half his time working in a hospital told us that he found it far easier to meet the needs of patients and their families than he did to deal with the undercurrents and resistances of the members of his community. Instead of supporting the community's mission, a tangled skein of interpersonal relationships within the community often drained energies needed for that objective.

THE PROCESS IN BRIEF

Our work has prompted the evolution of a model for addressing the polarities between individual

and institution that often characterize life within religious communities. The model calls for individuals to share with colleagues something about their preferred living styles as well as changes they would like the community to consider. In this sharing, experiences that have been withheld are brought to the foreground. The resulting fund of information becomes the basis for evaluating difficulties in light of each member's visions of optimal community life.

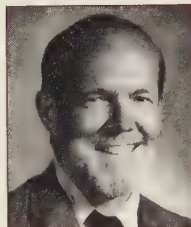
As they begin to share their visions of community, members build connections between resources and possibilities. Instead of feeling overwhelmed by the weight of community structure, they begin to feel that they can influence community. This emerging sense of empowerment and confidence in community can affirm members in their commitment to mission.

RECOMMENDED READING

Hanson, P. *The People Called: The Growth of Community in the Bible*. San Francisco, California: Harper & Row, 1986.

Peck, S. *The Different Drum: Community Making and Peace*. New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987.

Vanier, J. *Community and Growth*. New York, New York: Paulist Press, 1979.



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BOOK REVIEWS

Alcoholism's Children: ACOAs in Priesthood and Religious Life, by Sean Sammon, F.M.S. New York, New York: Alba House, 1989. 109 pp. \$4.95.

Sean Sammon, president of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, provincial of his congregation of Brothers, and psychologist, offers a book that is clear, concise, and for the most part well integrated. He has competently, with a pastoral eye and heart, assimilated volumes of recent material designed for the healing of adult children of alcoholics (ACOAs). By sharply etching typical scenes to open each chapter, while acknowledging that "each addicted person is different," Sammon may cut through any lingering denial in his readers.

As Sammon states, "alcoholism is a family affair." It is a disease difficult to diagnose, but it does progress, leading to illness and eventual death. In his opening chapter Sammon describes the development of this disease characterized by a primary relationship, a preoccupation, with alcohol. He includes important information, such as how a person functions during a blackout, and typical defenses and behaviors of the alcoholic. This may be key data not only for those who grew up in an alcoholic family but also for those currently living in community with alcoholics.

Sammon describes dynamics of the family as its members center on the alcoholic, sharing the sick person's external defenses and, more painfully, his or her interior shame. Just as the family-of-origin system is polluted, the religious community or parish family may respond in toxic ways—for example, by trying to rescue the alcoholic, or to assume responsibility that is inappropriate, or to maintain a false loyalty, all in the name of charity. Full of secret shame for "failing" the alcoholic, the family denies any problem or pain.

Instead of the usual dysfunctional family rules (don't feel, don't talk, don't trust), the alcoholic's family adopts the rules of denial, silence, rigidity, and isolation. Denial includes the parents' lying, which invalidates a child's perceptions and feel-

ings, setting up a life of pretense. Silence grows out of shame and fear of rejection. Although the alcoholic is allowed to be erratic, the family becomes rigid, each member attempting not only to control the self but to control others in the family so as to stave off chaos; such families stifle spontaneity, creativity, and play. Sammon notes that the isolation necessary to survival in such a family translates into adult problems with relationships and closeness—and, we might add, with vulnerability, neediness, and dependency.

Because this book is particularly focused on priests and religious, Sammon spells out the many nuances of the family roles. Whereas "rebels" are dominated by their anger and "mascots" are controlled by their wit, "heroes" and "lost children" seem especially drawn to church ministry. Some heroes are responsible, accentuating action and accomplishments; others are placating, attending to and nurturing others in need or pain. Both types of heroes suffer from compulsivity and, often, depression. Lost children are characterized by loneliness and passivity; they feel powerless and look for rescue. However, these family roles carry strengths once they become more flexible and free. The lost child values solitude and may develop a rich inner life if his or her capacity for intimacy can grow concomitantly; otherwise the "spiritual" life can be a defense against true intimacy with God. The hero may make an effective leader or peacemaker as his or her awareness and freedom deepen.

In his chapter on intervention, Sammon reminds us that just as the whole family once participated in the disease, the community participates in alcoholism. He teaches how to intervene: first, recognize the problem; then, document incidents in concrete detail, but without evaluating the behaviors. In preparation for the intervention, these specifics should be put in writing. Sammon even describes an unsuccessful intervention that allows the confronted one to promise in writing that he or she will not drink again, or else treatment will be ordered. Other experts skilled in intervention would advocate having a car wait outside to take the person to residential treatment. A promise of "If I drink, then I will enter treatment," if treatment means regular participation in Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), is simply not acceptable. Since Sammon notes that treatment, meaning AA, is

absolutely necessary for healing, it is puzzling that he allows a promise not to drink, which is likely to create a "dry drunk" exercising enormous will-power but not being healed.

Following Gravitz, Bowden, and Cermak as he discusses recovery, Sammon includes his own original insights, such as warnings to the adult offspring of alcoholics not to numb pain, engage in "magical thinking," go it alone, or intellectualize. Some move into adult life merely surviving, empty of a true identity. Recovering and healing, however, invite reflection on core issues, truth rather than denial, trust rather than control. Integration occurs as the ACOA reclaims cut-off parts of the self, such as needs, wants, and feelings, risking a new congruence in thinking, feeling, and acting. This leads to new possibilities, new choices for life and freedom, transformation—indeed, a kind of rebirth.

The primary drawbacks to this excellent work are that Sammon does not depict the isolation of many diocesan rectories or include in his vignettes older religious and priests, whose shame is probably compounded by the church's, and even society's, moralizing about alcohol. A highlight of this book is that each chapter ends with reflection questions that foster self-awareness rather than mere parroting of the text. For example, Sammon invites his readers to reflect on and to discover the strengths they have developed in their family roles. Sammon's research, the specificity of his examples, and the simplicity of the book's purpose and style make this work a powerful tool for religious, priests, and lay ministers.

—Rea McDonnell, S.S.N.D.



Sister Rea McDonnell, S.S.N.D., serves as pastoral counselor and spiritual director at the Consultation Center at Adelphi, Maryland.

The Sower's Seeds, by Brian Cavanaugh, T.O.R. New York, New York: Paulist Press, 1990. 101 pp. \$5.95.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the one who brings glad tidings, announcing peace, bearing good news, announcing salvation, and saying to Zion, "Your God is King." (Isaiah 52:7)

This passage from Isaiah, which is also quoted by Paul in chapter 10 of the Letter to the Romans,

always struck me as a little unusual. Why the messenger's feet? Why not voice, or hands, or heart? Only recently did it occur to me that these words could only be spoken by someone who appreciated the difficulty of announcing good news. For us, words are often too cheap. We receive reams of junk mail every month, most of which we never glance at. We are subjected to endless opinions on television talk shows, all bringing out the finely nuanced implications of a spectrum of positions on any subject. In this age of information it seems there is too much to go around, all of it of the greatest importance, or so we are told by those who have special interests. The prophet, on the other hand, praises the feet of the one who has brought good news at a high price, over steep mountains, on long dusty trails, at great personal expense.

When words are cheap, people stop listening. Why pay attention? What is there to learn? What is there to hear that we have not heard before? Lost in the midst of the words, however, is the gospel, the good news of the Word of God. The greatest problem of the preacher is how to help people distinguish the Word from the words. This is, of course, complicated by the fact that far too many preachers are a little fuzzy on the distinction themselves. To many hearers of the Word, most preaching simply adds to the barrage of verbal overload.

Enter the story. It is not a complicated medium. It need not be long and drawn out. Its use of images and emotion pulls the listener in, attaching the story to one's own experiences. Long after the preacher's point is forgotten, the story lives on in the mind and the heart (which of course means that the preacher's point has not been forgotten at all). Anyone who has used a story in preaching, retreat work, teaching, or practically any other form of ministry can attest to its effectiveness.

The use of storytelling, revered by simpler cultures, has long been consigned to minor importance in our intellectual and scientific society. But the story is making a comeback, inspired by our own growing understanding of the way we humans learn. Storytelling isn't just for kids anymore, or perhaps more accurately, it answers a need for the reclaiming of what is youthful in all of us. Therefore, we have seen over recent years a growing number of collections of stories, presented to those who are in various forms of ministry and education. I can verify from my own ministry of retreat work and spiritual direction how helpful a story can be. Often a story or image is the most captivating and memorable event of an entire presentation.

Brian Cavanaugh's book *The Sower's Seeds* is one of the latest examples of this expanding library of material. In a relatively small number of pages, Cavanaugh presents us with one hundred stories; a few are his own, but most are gleaned from a variety of sources past and present. They are stories that charm and challenge, stories of human

warmth and practical wisdom. Many of the stories are real-life anecdotes; others are classics from the store of spiritual treasure. Cavanaugh has gone to some lengths in attempting to track the source of each story. That so many remain anonymous or untraceable is witness enough to the universality of the medium.

Of additional help to those in ministry is the extensive thematic assistance the book offers. An index of themes is included at the end of the book, and each story is followed by suggestions of its dominant themes. Anyone who has searched through a handful of resources for a last-minute illustration will appreciate these features. Cavanaugh also offers a list of resources for further reading. For anyone just setting out on the journey of storytelling, this list gives many positive directions for exploration.

The book's title suggests a gospel image. The Word springs from small beginnings. Each story we hear or tell opens us a little more to the story of good news that is being told in each of us.

—Bernard Tickerhoof, T.O.R.

Father Bernard Tickerhoof, a friar of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis, is on the staff of the Burning Bush House of Prayer in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Pilgrims in This World: A Lay Spirituality, by Virginia Sullivan Finn. New York, New York: Paulist Press, 1990. 312 pp. \$12.95.

Of Human Hands: A Reader in the Spirituality of Work, edited by Gregory F. Augustine Pierce. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Augsburg Publishing House, 1991. 118 pp. \$8.95.

Although both these books were written for the laity, they are valuable resources for priests and religious, especially those involved in the spiritual direction of laity or in collaborative work with laity in ministry. One was written by a laywoman; the other, part of a series titled *The Christian in the World*, was edited by a layman. Both recount the stories of a number of laypersons, as told by themselves. One of the great attributes of both books is that they are virtually free of pietistic God-talk and theological jargon, too prevalent in many books on spirituality.

Readers, especially clergy and religious, will have to approach these books with an open mind, willing to have their paradigms for spirituality not just stretched but smashed. Many clergy and religious may miss the value of these books because of their need for a neat, systematized approach for spirituality. Both books approach spirituality not simply by adding a lay dimension to an overly systematic approach but by presenting spirituality in a less analytical and more experiential mode.

These books do not describe spirituality. Rather, they draw one through a journey of life, helping one to discover the spirituality ever present in the daily circumstances of living.

Finn has written a book that speaks especially to married laywomen, affirming and celebrating the spirituality that is theirs. For Finn, spirituality is not so much about searching for God as it is about reflecting on the pleasant and painful experiences of one's life and discovering the spirituality inherent in every aspect of that life.

It is evident that Finn has made theologizing an intimate part of her life. She has discovered spirituality in everything. Her spirituality has been developed especially in the midst of her being daughter, wife, mother, and grandmother.

As a laywoman and professional lay minister, she could easily have used this forum to vent her anger toward her church. Instead, what comes through is a love for an imperfect church, as well as an honest, compassionate challenge to change those areas in need of change.

The final chapter focuses on the spirituality of individuals, not just in their families but also in the workplace, in the world. It describes the variety of ways in which spirituality has become incarnate in the lives of these men and women.

Pierce picks up where Finn leaves off, allowing a number of people to describe how they encounter God and experience integrity in living out their lives where God has placed them—in a supermarket, in a post office, in a court of law. He has culled the chapters from previously published material. The variety in the stories epitomizes the variety of ways in which people live out their Christian vocation and discover God in the midst of it.

Each of these books has its strong and weak points. I wish Finn's book were less wordy. Some of the longer chapters in Pierce's book I found the least interesting.

Both of these books will be a source of liberation for the many laypeople who will derive from them a reinforcement of what they have felt but were not convinced was really spirituality.

—Loughlan Sofield, S.T., M.A.

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